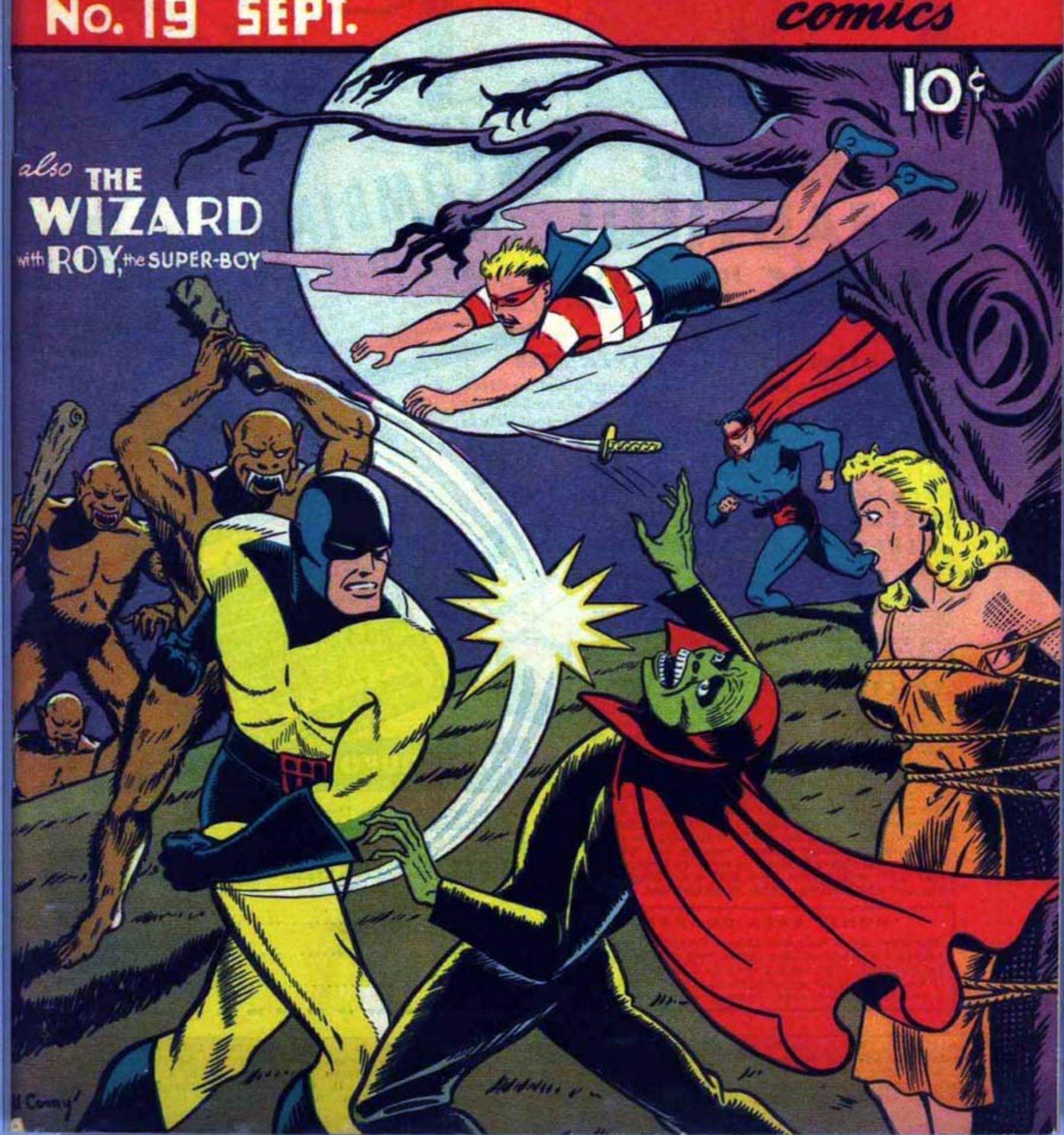


Featuring **THE BLACK HOOD**
TOP-NOTCH
No. 19 SEPT. *comics*

10¢

also **THE WIZARD**
with **ROY**, the SUPER-BOY





WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

THE BLACK HOOD

MAN OF MYSTERY



YOU ARE ABOUT TO MEET YOUR MAKER, SKULL. FOR THE LAST TIME, WILL YOU ALLOW ME TO ADMINISTER THE LAST RITES?

NO! BLAST YOU! GET OUT OF MY CELL!



GET OUT! GET OUT, I TELL YOU, OR I'LL...

BLESS ME!

I TOLD YOU HE WAS HOPELESS, FATHER! WE'D BETTER GO!



AT THAT MOMENT, IN A CABIN - FAR AWAY.....

YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED YOUR MISSION, BLACK HOOD. YOU'VE BROUGHT THE SKULL TO JUSTICE!

YES, HERMIT!..BUT AS KIP BURLAND, I'M STILL A WANTED MAN!

AT LAST THE DAY OF RETRIBUTION SEEMS TO BE AT HAND. RETRIBUTION FOR THE CLEVEREST, MOST SOULLESS CREATURE TO BLIGHT GODS GREEN EARTH..THE SKULL. AND YET THERE ARE THOSE WHO ARE FILLED WITH ANXIETY... FOR UNTIL THE MAD GENIUS OF CRIME IS LOWERED INTO HIS COFFIN NONE MAY DRAW AN EASY BREATH.

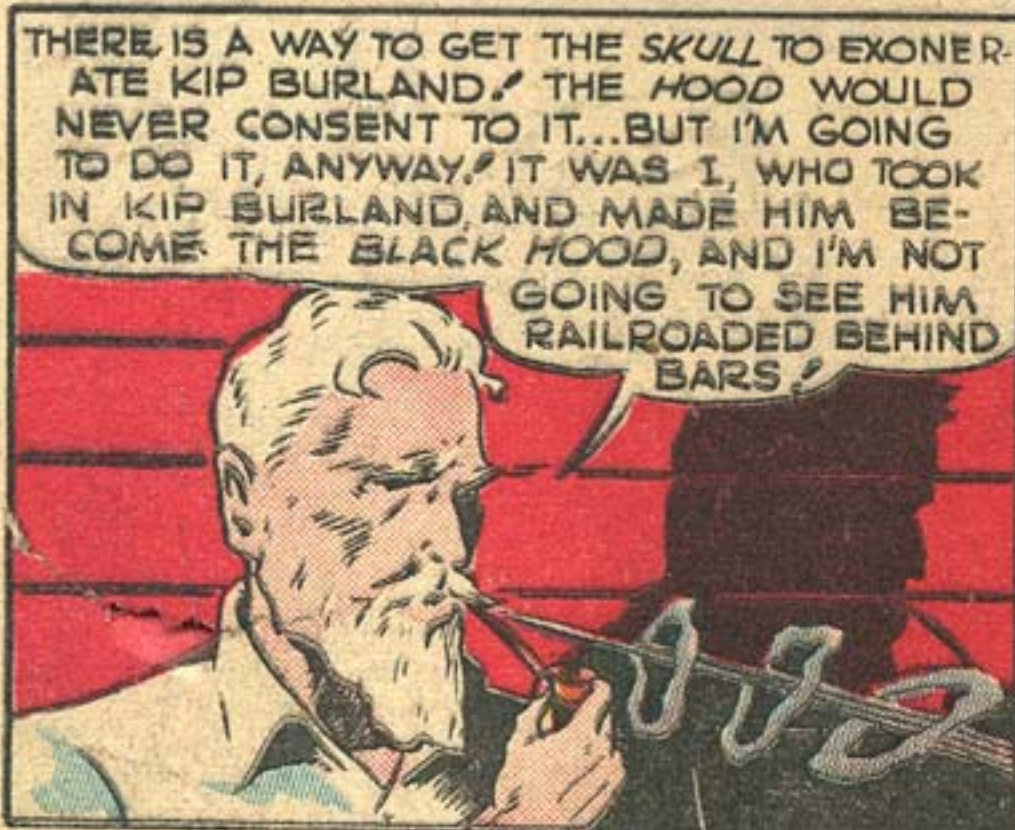


AND THE ONLY MAN WHO COULD PROVE MY INNOCENCE, THE SKULL - THE ONE WHO FRAMED ME - IS ABOUT TO DIE... IRONIC, ISN'T IT?

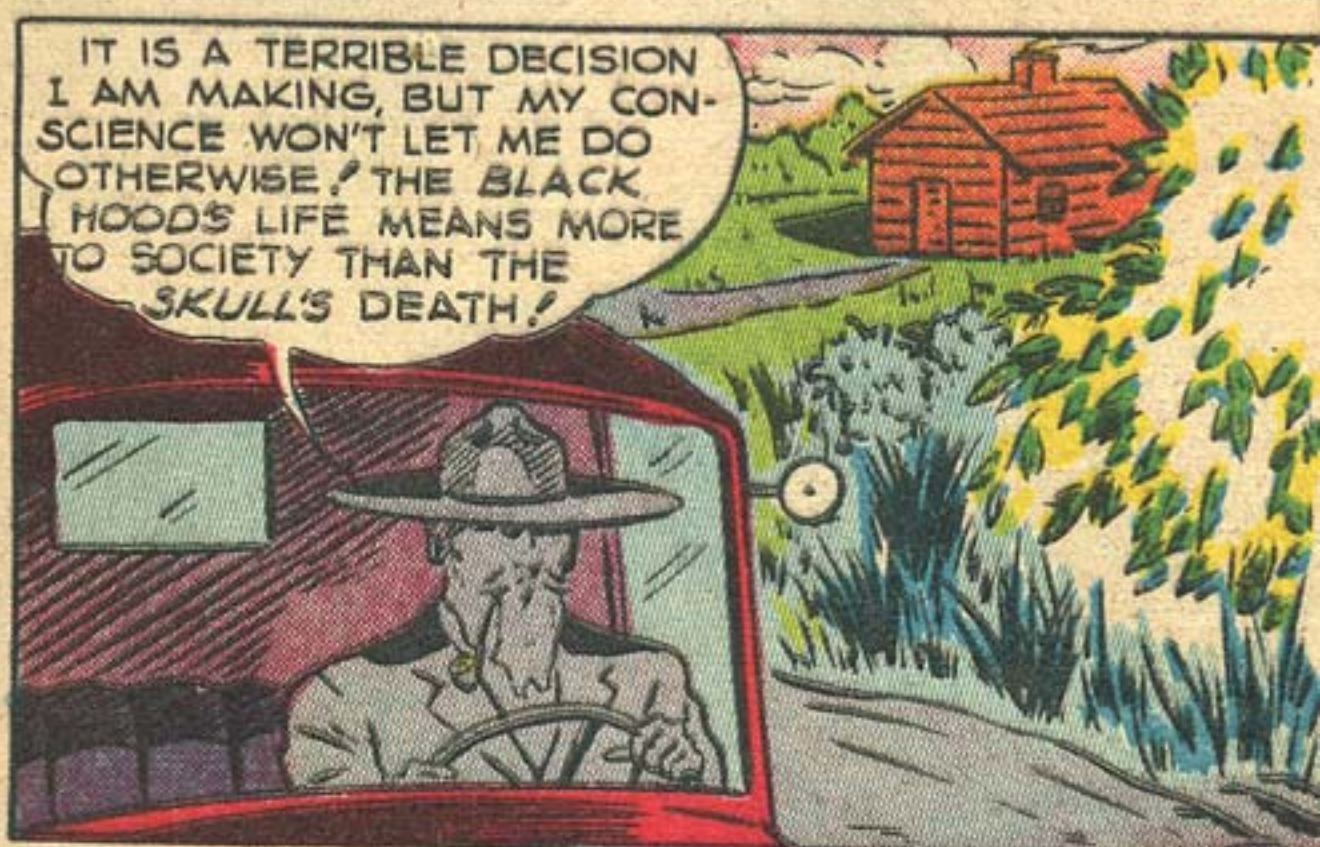
PERHAPS WE COULD PREVAIL UPON HIM TO CONFESS!



THE SKULL WOULD NEVER LIFT A HELPING HAND FOR ANY MAN EVEN IF HIS SOUL'S SALVATION DEPENDED ON IT! (YAWN) I'M MORE TIRED THAN I REALIZED!



THERE IS A WAY TO GET THE SKULL TO EXONERATE KIP BURLAND! THE HOOD WOULD NEVER CONSENT TO IT... BUT I'M GOING TO DO IT, ANYWAY! IT WAS I, WHO TOOK IN KIP BURLAND, AND MADE HIM BECOME THE BLACK HOOD, AND I'M NOT GOING TO SEE HIM RAILROADED BEHIND BARS!



IT IS A TERRIBLE DECISION I AM MAKING, BUT MY CONSCIENCE WON'T LET ME DO OTHERWISE! THE BLACK HOOD'S LIFE MEANS MORE TO SOCIETY THAN THE SKULL'S DEATH!



LATER....

HO, HUM! MUST HAVE DOZED OFF! HERMIT!... OH, HERMIT! WHERE ARE YOU?



THAT'S FUNNY! HE'S GONE... WHAT'S THAT ON THE TABLE! LOOKS LIKE A NOTE!



Hood:

Give gone to the prison to drive a bargain with the skull - a confession that will exonerate you and I in turn will allow him an opportunity to escape. My plan is that you will catch him as soon as he sets foot out of the jail. When one deals with as black-hearted a rogue as the skull, having scruples would be folly. Hermit, Hermit!



QUICK AS THOUGHT, THE DARK KNIGHT OF JUSTICE SETS OUT FOR THE JAIL....

THE HERMIT'S MAD TO THINK HE CAN HOODWINK THE SKULL! I MUST TRY TO STOP HIM! PRAY GOD I'M NOT TOO LATE!

WHILE AT THAT MOMENT...

THIS WAY, MISTER!
YOU CAN'T VISIT
HIM FOR MORE
THAN FIVE
MINUTES!



HERMIT, CONFOUND
YOUR NERVE! YOU
AND THE BLACK
HOOD ARE RESPON-
SIBLE FOR MY CAP-
TURE! IF I WEREN'T
IN CHAINS, I'D
THROTTLE YOU!



EASY,
SKULL!
I CAME
HERE TO
HELP YOU
ESCAPE!

WHAT? YOU
HELP ME ES-
CAPE? YOU
DARE TO
MOCK ME?
...THE SKULL?

I'M SERIOUS, SKULL!
I'LL GET YOU OUT
OF HERE IF
YOU'LL SIGN A
CONFESSION I'VE
GOT HERE IN MY
POCKET, EXONER-
ATING KIP
BURLAND!



NOW, HERE'S MY PLAN!
WE'LL CHANGE CLOTHING.. THEN
I'LL GET INTO YOUR COT AND
PULL THE BLANKET OVER MY
HEAD SO THAT I WON'T BE
RECOGNIZED! I HAVE A
SKELETON KEY THAT WILL
UNLOCK YOUR SHACKLES!



HMM, VERY
NEAT.. AND
THEY'LL LET
ME OUT, THINK-
ING I'M
YOU!

THERE HERMIT IS MY SIGNED
CONFESSION, BUT FIRST,
GET THESE CHAINS OFF
ME!



WHEN THE HERMIT
UNLOCKS THE CHAINS.

TAKE
THAT! YOU
FOOL!



YOU REALLY THOUGHT I
WOULD KEEP MY PART
OF THE BARGAIN, EH?
YOU'LL NEVER COMMIT
THAT FOLLY
AGAIN!

AARRGH!



SO YOU WISH TO
POSE AS THE
SKULL! VERY
WELL, I'LL
MAKE A PER-
FECT JOB OF
IT! A MILD
INJECTION OF
MY POISON,
AND...





...NOW YOUR WITS ARE PARALYZED. SOON, YOUR FACE SHALL LOOK LIKE MINE, SO THAT NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO TELL US APART!



HA, HA, HA! WHAT A JEST! MY POISON IS BEGINNING TO TAKE EFFECT! HIS FACE IS CHANGING!



NOW TO GET BACK MY SIGNED CONFESSION! HE DROPPED IT ON THE FLOOR! HARK! I HEAR FOOT-STEPS! THE GUARDS RETURNING!



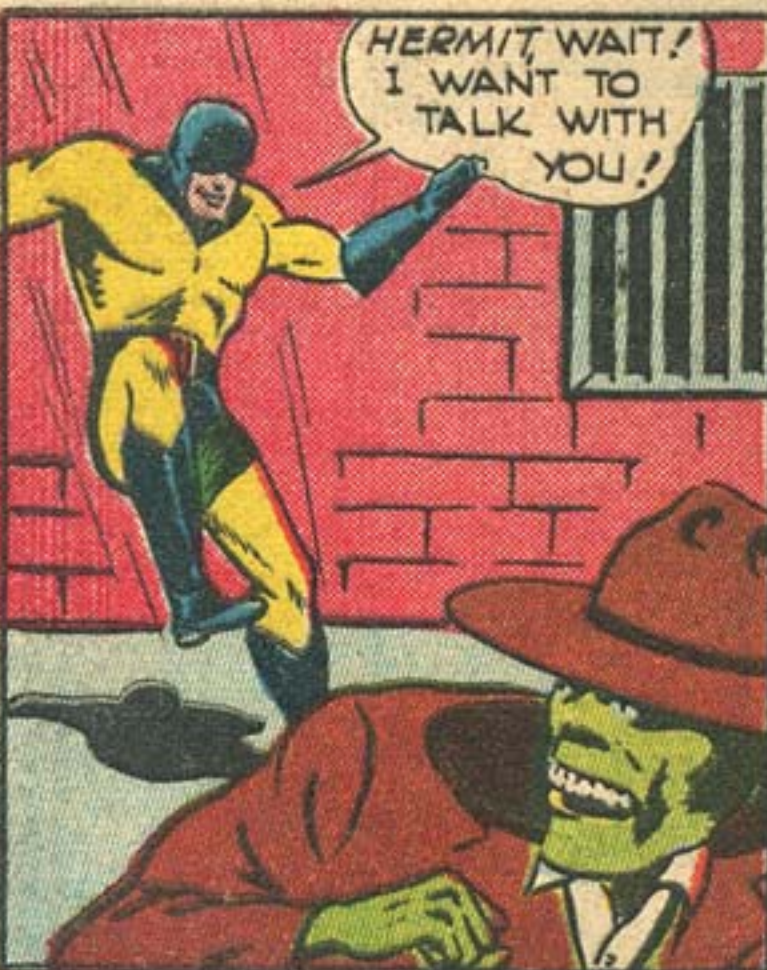
OKAY! TIME'S UP!

VERY WELL OFFICER, I'LL LEAVE NOW!



WHILE OUTSIDE.....

THE HERMIT! HIS PLAN MUST HAVE FAILED! THANK HEAVENS FOR THAT!



HERMIT, WAIT! I WANT TO TALK WITH YOU!



WHAT IN....!

YOU! THE SKULL!

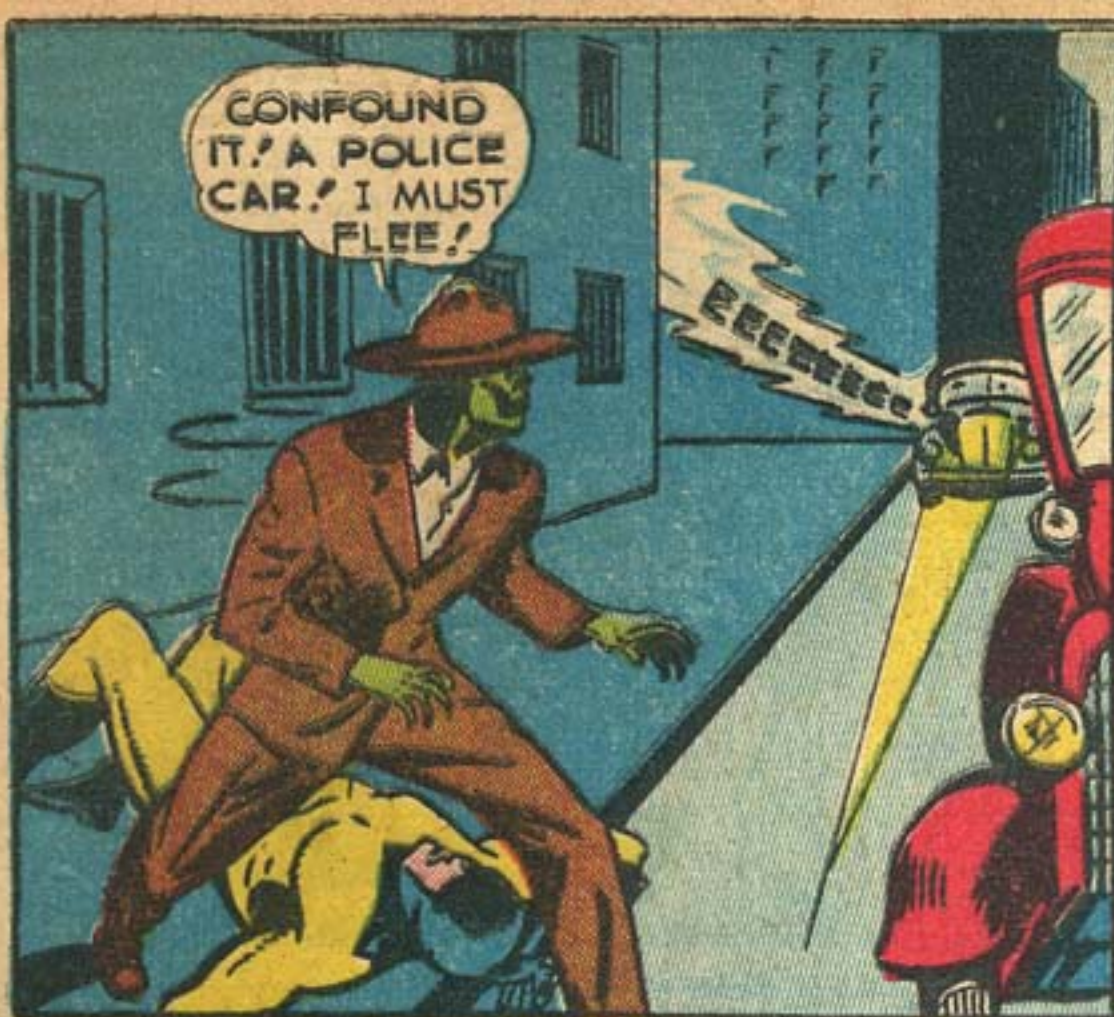


YES! ME, THE SKULL! SO I FOOLED YOU TOO, DIDN'T I?

BONG!



NOW, I EVEN MY SCORE WITH YOU, HOOD!







I'LL BE A MONKEY'S UNCLE! WHERE COULD HE HAVE DISAPPEARED TO?

NOT A SIGN OF HIM!



LATER...

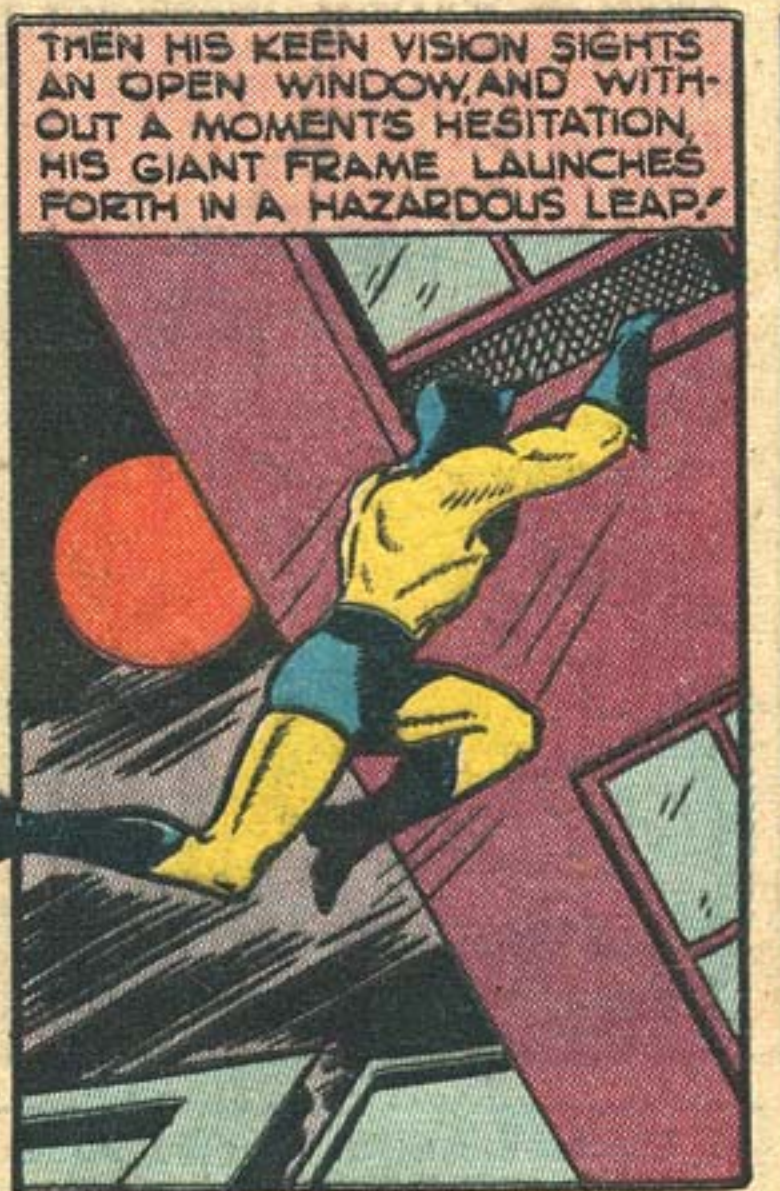
THE COAST IS CLEAR! I'D BETTER MAKE MY BREAK NOW!



UNLESS I ACT FAST, THE HERMIT WILL DIE IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR! THE GOVERNOR'S APARTMENT IS NEARBY! I'LL GO SEE HIM!



RUNNING WITH THE SPEED OF AN ANTELOPE, THE DARK KNIGHT OF JUSTICE ARRIVES AT THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, AND SCALES THE BUILDING AS EASILY AS THOUGH IT WERE A TOY-HOUSE...



THEN HIS KEEN VISION SIGHTS AN OPEN WINDOW, AND WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION, HIS GIANT FRAME LAUNCHES FORTH IN A HAZARDOUS LEAP!



THE BLACK HOOD! HOW... WHA...

SORRY TO ENTER SO ABRUPTLY, MR. GOVERNOR, BUT IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!



THE BLACK HOOD RELATES THE ENTIRE STORY....

AND SO, MR. GOVERNOR, THE MURDEROUS SKULL IS ONCE AGAIN ON THE LOOSE AND AN INNOCENT MAN IS DOOMED TO DIE IN HIS PLACE!

IT SOUNDS FANTASTIC!



BUT IF THERE IS ANY TRUTH IN WHAT YOU SAY, I SHOULD BE THE LAST ONE TO SEE SUCH AN INJUSTICE DONE! I'LL PHONE IN A REPRIEVE FOR 48 HOURS! THAT SHOULD BE AMPLIFIED TO PRODUCE THE SKULL!



THANK YOU MR. GOVERNOR! I'LL BRING THE SKULL TO YOU IN 48 HOURS OR DIE IN THE ATTEMPT!

LATER AT THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE WHERE BARBARA SUTTON IS EMPLOYED.



THE BLACK HOOD JUST GAVE ME A STORY THAT'LL FLOOR YOU! THE SKULL'S ESCAPED! HE INJECTED SOME OF HIS VENOM INTO THE HERMIT AND SO THE POLICE DON'T SUSPECT THE TRUTH!



I KNOW IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT YOU MUST, OR AN INNOCENT MAN WILL DIE IN THE CHAIR, AND A MURDERER WILL BE LOOSED ONCE AGAIN ON SOCIETY! NOW, THE HOOD GAVE ME A PLAN, WHICH SOUNDS PRETTY GOOD! HERE IT IS!



KIP RELATES THE PLAN IN DETAIL..



OKAY, I'M SOLD! I'LL PROBABLY WIND UP SELLING NEWSPAPERS INSTEAD OF WRITING 'EM... BUT IF ANYTHING COMES OF IT, IT'LL BE THE BIGGEST STORY IN A GENERATION!



NEXT DAY..



THE ANNOUNCEMENT CAUSES A FUROR AMONG RIVAL NEWSPAPERS.....



I SWEAR I HUNG AROUND THE DEATH HOUSE, CHIEF! I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW THE SKULL COULD HAVE BEEN ELECTROCUTED WITHOUT ME KNOWING IT!

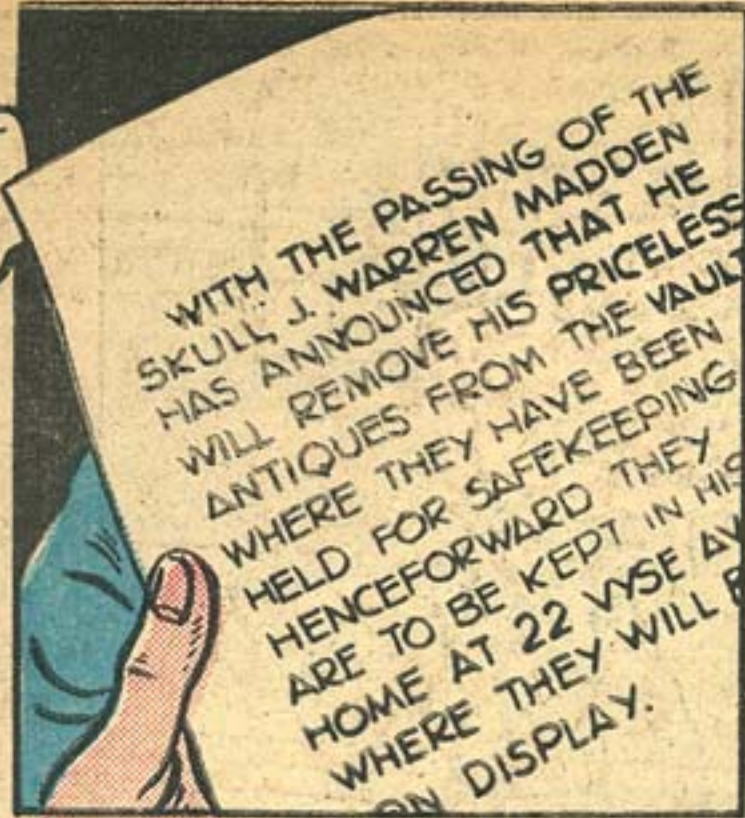


WHILE SERGEANT MCGINTY, WHO IS READING THE HEADLINE, REACTS QUITE DIFFERENTLY...





HEY! WHAT'S THIS ITEM RIGHT ALONG-SIDE THE SKULL STORY?



WITH THE PASSING OF THE SKULL, J. WARREN MADDEN HAS ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL REMOVE HIS PRICELESS ANTIQUES FROM THE VAULT WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN HELD FOR SAFEKEEPING HENCEFORWARD THEY ARE TO BE KEPT IN HIS HOME AT 22 VISE AVENUE WHERE THEY WILL BE ON DISPLAY.



NO WONDER THERE'RE SO MANY ROBBERIES AROUND! THIS GOOF MADDEN IS FORGETTIN' THE BLACK HOODS STILL ON THE LOOSE!



WELL, HE'S GOIN' TO GET POLICE PROTECTION WHETHER HE WANTS TO OR NOT! C'MON, MEN!



AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE SKULL'S HIDEOUT....

HA, HA, HA! SO THE SKULL IS DEAD! THIS IS YOUR GREATEST HOAX YET, SKULL!



HMM.. WHAT'S THIS? J. WARREN MADDEN, PRICELESS ANTIQUES!



STRANGE, I NEVER HEARD OF THIS MILLIONAIRE MADDEN, BEFORE! SOMETHING VERY PECULIAR ABOUT THIS. BUT IT'S WORTHWHILE LOOKING INTO!



WHILE AT THE MADDEN ESTATE..

WELL, HERE WE ARE MEN! LET'S GO IN!



MR. MADDEN! HEY, MR. MADDEN! IS SOMEBODY HERE? IS ANYBODY HERE?

STRANGE! THE HOUSE SEEMS TO BE DESERTED!

HOW DO YA LIKE THAT FOR A MUTTON HEAD? HAS A HOUSE FULL OF STUFF THAT'LL BRING THE CROOKS LIKE FLEAS AROUND A DEAD HORSE...AND THEN WALKS OUT AS NICE AS YOU PLEASE WITH NOBODY AROUND TO WATCH IT!

MAYBE ONE OF THOSE EC-CENTRIC MILLIONAIRES, SARGE!

SCATTER AROUND THE GROUNDS! WE'RE GOIN' TO KEEP GUARD!

THE SKULL ALSO ARRIVES AT THE MADDEN MANSION, AND SEES....

HMM! THE PLACE IS SURROUNDED BY POLICE! I GUESS THERE IS TRUTH TO THE STORY AFTER ALL!

A LITTLE WHILE LATER...

WESTERN TELEGRAPH MESSAGE FOR J. WARREN MADDEN! IS THIS HIS HOUSE?

YEAH..BUT HE'S NOT HOME NOW! JUST LEAVE IT ON HIS TABLE!

OKAY!

HEH, HEH, HOW ABSURDLY SIMPLE IT WAS TO GET PAST THAT MORONIC EXCUSE FOR A POLICEMAN MCGINTY! NOW TO GET THE ANTIQUES!

HELLO, SKULL! SO YOU FELL FOR MY TRAP, EH?

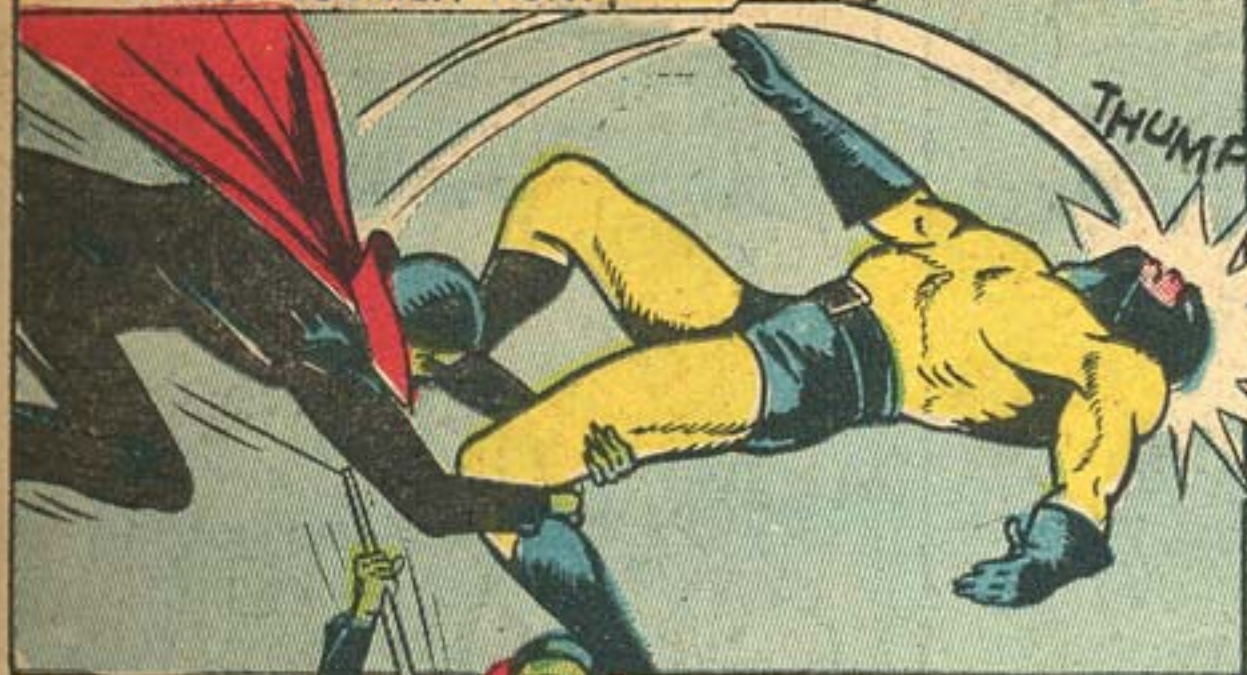
THE BLACK HOOD!

I KNEW YOUR GREEDY FINGERS WOULD ITCH WHEN YOU SAW AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PLUNDER!

DON'T YOU KNOW YET...IT'S NOT POLITE TO TURN YOUR BACK ON COMPANY?

OOOF!

THE SKULL TURNS ON THE BLACK HOOD WITH TIGERISH FURY!



SO YOU THOUGHT TO CATCH ME IN YOUR TRAP, EH?



WELL, WE SHALL SEE WHICH ONE OF US WAS THE CAT, AND WHICH THE MOUSE!



AS THE SKULL LUNGES AT THE PROSTRATE FIGURE WITH HIS SPEAR, THE HOOD TWISTS DESPERATELY TO ONE SIDE, AND...



WHILE OUTSIDE...

NOT A SIGN OF A CROOK AROUND! IT'S AS QUIET AS A GRAVEYARD! I GUESS WE'VE GOT THE SITUATION WELL IN HAND, EH BOYS?

YOU SAID IT, SARGE!



EVEN WHILE MCGINTY SPEAKS, A SCENE WHICH IS A FAR CRY FROM PEACEFUL, TRANSPIRES PRACTICALLY UNDER HIS NOSE.....



YOU HAD YOUR ACE IN THE HOLE, SKULL!

OOMP!

BUT I'M PLAYING TRUMPS!



NOW, HOW AM I GOING TO GET OUT OF HERE WITHOUT TANGLING WITH MCGINTY!



JUPITER! IF I DON'T GET THE SKULL TO THE GOVERNOR IN FIFTEEN MINUTES, I'LL BE TOO LATE TO SAVE THE HERMIT!



BARBARA SAID HER UNCLE IS JUST AWAY ON HIS VACATION! MAYBE HE LEFT SOME CLOTHING AROUND. I'M IN LUCK! THERE ARE SOME!



A SHORT WHILE LATER...

ER..AH..HELLO!

JEEPERS! WHO ARE YOU? WHY DIDN'T YOU ANSWER BEFORE WHEN I CALLED!



I'M J. WARREN MADDEN, AND THIS IS MY WIFE! SHE'S VERY ILL! WE WERE UPSTAIRS AND DIDN'T HEAR YOU! I MUST GET HER TO A DOCTOR IN A HURRY!

TSK, TSK, TOO BAD. HOP INTO MY CAR! I'LL TAKE YOU THERE MYSELF!



NOW, WHERE DO WE GO?... TO THE NEAREST HOSPITAL?

ER..NO..OUR OWN DOCTOR LIVES ON BARRET STREET! TAKE US THERE PLEASE, AND HURRY!



I'LL BE RIGHT BACK! YOU GUYS KEEP A SHARP WATCH WHILE I'M GONE!



WHILE THE HOOD SPEEDS TOWARD THE GOVERNOR'S HOME, THE HERMIT BARELY CONSCIOUS BECAUSE OF THE SKULL'S VENOM IN HIS VEINS, IS MARCHED DOWN THE GRIM, ONE WAY CORRIDOR TO THE ELECTRIC CHAIR...



GRAB A LOAD OF THE BIG, BAD SKULL, MAC! HE KIN HARDLY WALK!

YEAH! ALL THESE TOUGH GUYS GET RUBBER IN THEIR LEGS, WHEN THEY WALK DOWN THE LAST MILE!



WELL HERE WE ARE!... THANKS A MILLION, SARGE!

THAT'S OKAY! SAY YOUR DOCTOR LIVES IN A SWANKY PLACE ALL RIGHT!... A REAL GOVERNOR'S MANSION, HA, HA!



I'LL WAIT RIGHT HERE FOR YOU, MR. MADDEN, AND TAKE YOU BACK HOME!

ALL RIGHT, SERGEANT!

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I WAS EVER GLAD ABOUT MCGINTY'S DUMBNESS!





SWIFTLY SHEDDING HIS DISGUISE, THE HOOD BURSTS INTO THE GOVERNOR'S ROOM...

THE BLACK HOOD! HOW... WHA...

HELLO, MR. GOVERNOR! I'VE BROUGHT YOU THE PROOF!



HERE HE IS! THE REAL SKULL! YOU'VE GOT TO CALL UP AND SAVE THE HERMIT! THERE ISN'T A SECOND TO SPARE!

IT...IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!



HELLO!..HELLO!.. OPERATOR! CONNECT ME WITH THE STATE PRISON! HURRY!..IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!



WILL THE GOVERNOR'S PARDON ARRIVE TOO LATE?



ANOTHER THIRTY SECONDS AND I TURN ON THE JUICE!



STOP! DON'T PULL THE SWITCH!

WHAT IN...



BACK AT THE GOVERNOR'S HOME...

I BEG YOUR PARDON, SIR, BUT IF YOU'RE SERGEANT MCGINTY, THE GOVERNOR WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU!

SURE, SURE! ER..WHAT'S THAT?



THE GOVERNOR DID YOU SAY?... WHAT IS THIS, A GAG?



HOLY SMOKES! IT REALLY IS THE GOVERNOR! BY THE BLARNEY STONE! YOU.. HOW'D YOU GET HERE?



GOVERNOR! THAT'S THE SKULL! HOW'D HE ESCAPE? HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD!

DIDN'T YOU KNOW? THE BLACK HOOD TOLD ME YOU WERE IN ON HIS PLAN!



AND THERE'S A FINE PROMOTION IN IT FOR YOU, MCGINTY!

ER...AH...HARRUMPH...THANKS, MR. GOVERNOR!



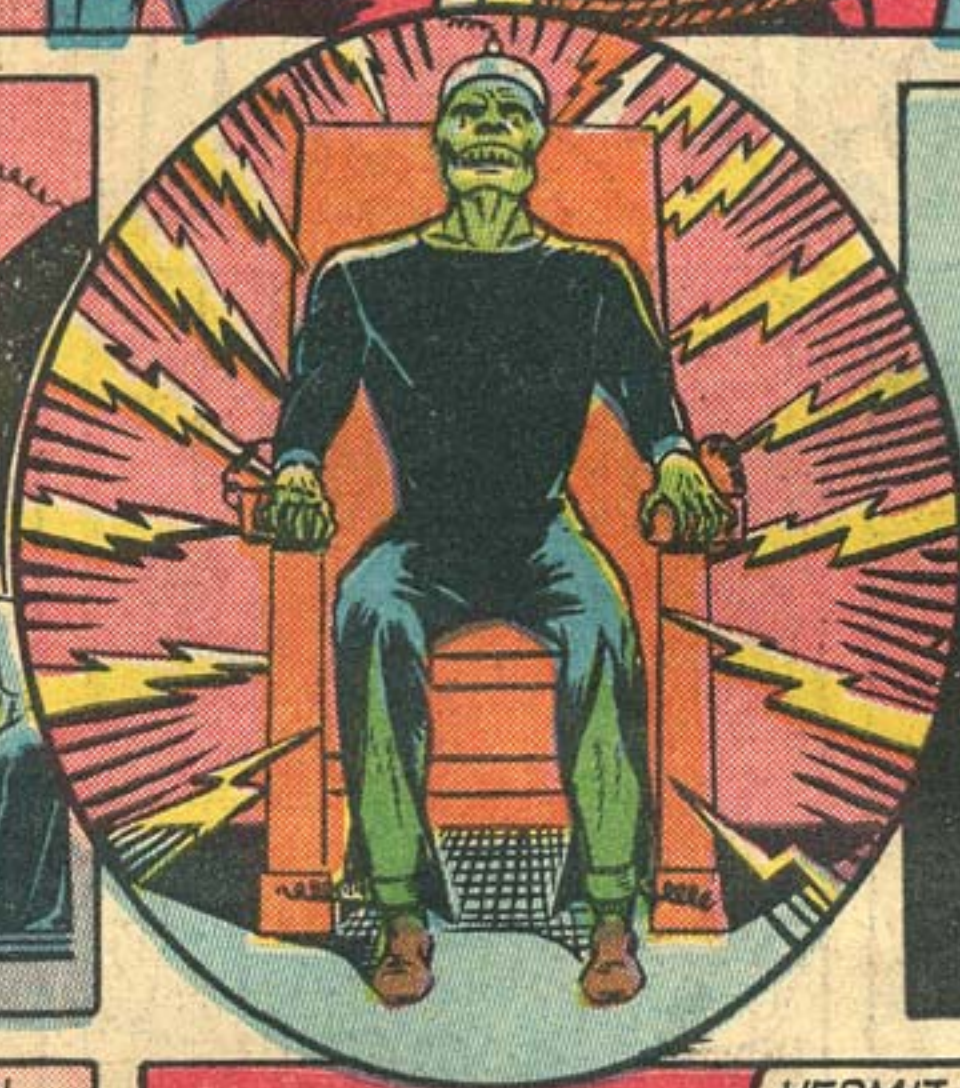
HAW, HAW! IMAGINE THIS GINK THINKIN' HE COULD PULL A FAST ONE ON ME! THE GREAT SKULL! NUTS!..THE GREAT NUMBSKULL IS WHAT HE IS!

HA, HA! WELL, BE CAREFUL WITH HIM, SERGEANT!



THE FOLLOWING NIGHT...

WELL, THIS TIME WE'VE GOT THE REAL SKULL...AND IN ABOUT ONE MINUTE, HE'LL DRAW HIS LAST BREATH!



HE'S DEAD!



BACK IN THE HERMIT'S CABIN...

WELL, OLD TIMER, YOU'RE BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE YOUR OLD SELF AGAIN!

I GOT WHAT I WENT AFTER, HOOD! HERE IT IS!



KIP BURLAND IS NO LONGER A WANTED MAN! THAT CONFESSION EXONERATES YOU!

HERMIT, I..I'M SO CHOKED UP, I CAN HARDLY THANK YOU!

THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE GRIND SLOW BUT SURE. THE IRONIC TABLEAU OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST FORCE FOR LAW AND ORDER BEING HIMSELF WANTED BY THE LAW IS NO MORE. BUT FATE, THAT MASTER JESTER, HAS YET ANOTHER QUIRK IN STORE FOR THE DARK KNIGHT OF JUSTICE. AND THE BLACKHOOD, DESPITE HIS NEW FOUND LIBERTY, MEETS HIS SEVEREST TASK- AS THE MIST STEPS INTO THE SCENE IN NEXT MONTH'S..

TOP NOTCH COMICS!

IT WAS THE ONLY THING TO DO!!! THE BLACK HOOD, APPEARING MONTHLY IN TOP-NOTCH COMICS MET WITH SUCH OVERWHELMING ACCLAIM THAT WE HAD NO CHOICE. WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE PUBLICATION OF A **BLACK HOOD DETECTIVE MAGAZINE** FEATURING THE **DARK KNIGHT OF JUSTICE** IN A COMPLETE BOOK LENGTH NOVEL, ALONG WITH OTHER UNIQUE, BLOOD-CHILLING STORIES. YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS THE THRILL-SHOT YARN THAT'S IN STORE FOR YOU IN HIS INITIAL NOVEL...AND EVERYONE TO COME. LOOK FOR **BLACK HOOD DETECTIVE MAGAZINE**..... ONLY 10¢...ON SALE AT ALL NEWSSTANDS !!

The WIZARD

with ROY, the SUPER-BOY

ONE NIGHT, AS GEORGE CALDWELL, CRUSADING NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER, SITS AT HIS DESK PORING OVER AN EXPOSE HE IS ABOUT TO BRING TO THE PUBLIC, A HOODED FIGURE SLINKS FROM OUT THE SHADOWS. OMINOUSLY, THE INTRUDER, REACHING INTO HIS ROBE, DRAWS FORTH A GLEAMING DAGGER! THEN, BEFORE THE HELPLESS CALDWELL CAN SUMMON HIS WITS TO PROTECT HIMSELF, THE DEATH WEAPON FLASHES DOWNWARD AND.....



LATER THAT SAME NIGHT!

CALDWELL WAS MURDERED, EH, JANE?

YES BLANE, AS SOON AS I GOT THE NEWS I CALLED YOU!



JANE, BLANE AND ROY SOON ARRIVE AT THE SCENE OF THE MURDER!



LIEUTENANT CARSON, THIS IS MY BOSS, BLANE WHITNEY!

GLAD TO MEET YOU, LIEUTENANT! ANY CLUES? I KNOW EXACTLY WHO KILLED CALDWELL!



SEE THAT SKULL AND DAGGER? THAT'S THE VENDETTA SIGN OF THE PURPLE MAFIA!



THE PURPLE MAFIA! THAT'S THAT TERRORISTIC FOREIGN ORGANIZATION, ISN'T IT?

TERRORISTIC IS RIGHT! THEY'RE A PACK OF KILLERS! THEY WERE CLEANED UP ONCE BEFORE, YEARS AGO!



THEY'D MAKE A FINE FIFTH COLUMN NOW, THAT'S WHY THEY MUST HAVE RE-ORGANIZED! CALDWELL WAS PROBABLY ABOUT TO EXPOSE THEM AND THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT IT! BUT I'LL TRACK THEM DOWN, EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM!



HERE'S AN INTERESTING CLUE! CARSON SEEMS TO HAVE MISSED! I'LL HAVE A LOOK AT IT IN PRIVATE!

HMM! WONDER WHAT IT WAS BLANE SNEAKED INTO HIS POCKET! HE'S ACTING SUSPICIOUS! I THINK I'LL SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO!



LOOK WHAT I FOUND ROY! A BOTTLE OF INVISIBLE INK! IT MUST HAVE BEEN OVERTURNED IN THE STRUGGLE!

HUH! WONDER WHAT A NEWS-PAPER MAN'D WANT WITH THAT!



JUST THEN, JANE COMES UP AND LEAVES DROPS. MY HUNCH IS THAT CALDWELL TRIED TO WRITE A MESSAGE ABOUT HIS KILLER, MAYBE ON HIS OWN BODY!



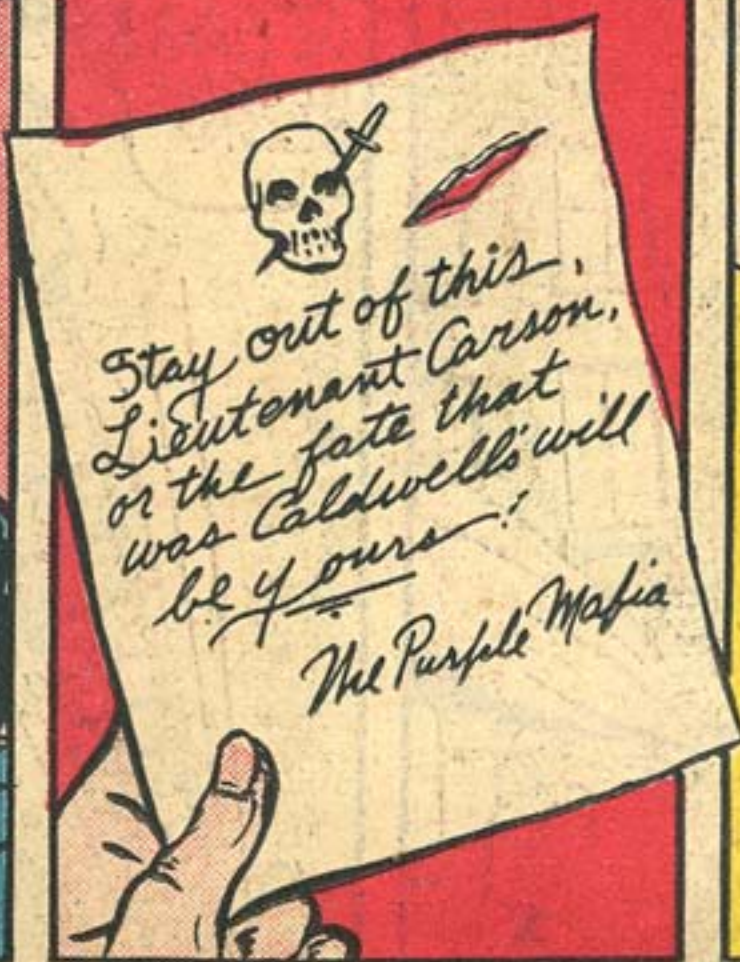
MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING TO BLANE'S HUNCH! IF THERE IS I'M NOT GOING TO MISS UP ON IT! IT MIGHT BE THE SCOOP OF THE YEAR! I'LL GET MOE, THE CAB DRIVER, TO HELP ME!



MEANWHILE BLANE REJOINS THE POLICE AND...



THAT KNIFE ALMOST FINISHED YOU OFF, WHITNEY, WHAT'S THIS TACKED ON IT? LOOKS LIKE A NOTE!



WELL, THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT THE PURPLE MAFIA NOW! IF THEY THINK FOR A MINUTE THAT THEY CAN SCARE ME OFF, THEY'RE CRAZY. I'M GOING THROUGH WITH THE INVESTIGATION!



IN THE MEANTIME, BLANE AND ROY HAVE SLIPPED INTO THE NEXT ROOM. A LIGHTNING-LIKE CHANGE, AND THE WIZARD AND ROY, THE SUPER BOY, FLASH FORTH IN PURSUIT OF THE KNIFE-THROWER!



NO USE MY CHASING ALONG, THE WIZARD'LL CATCH HIM IN NO TIME! I'LL GO TO THE MORGUE AND FOLLOW UP HIS CLUE ON THAT INVISIBLE MESSAGE!

WELL, LOOKS LIKE I'VE CORNERED HIM IN THIS ALLEY!



PANIC-STRICKEN, THE KNIFE-THROWER TRIES TO FLEE UP A FIRE ESCAPE!



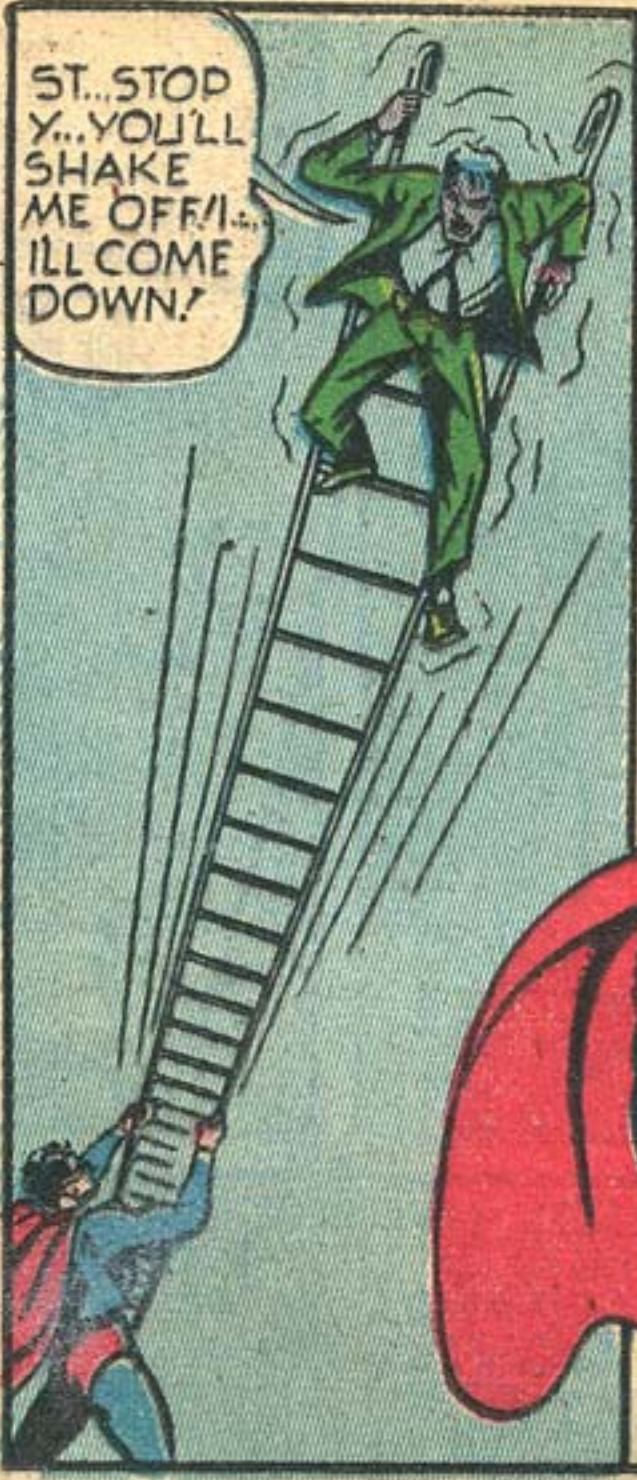
HMMM! I THINK I KNOW HOW TO GET HIM DOWN IN A HURRY!



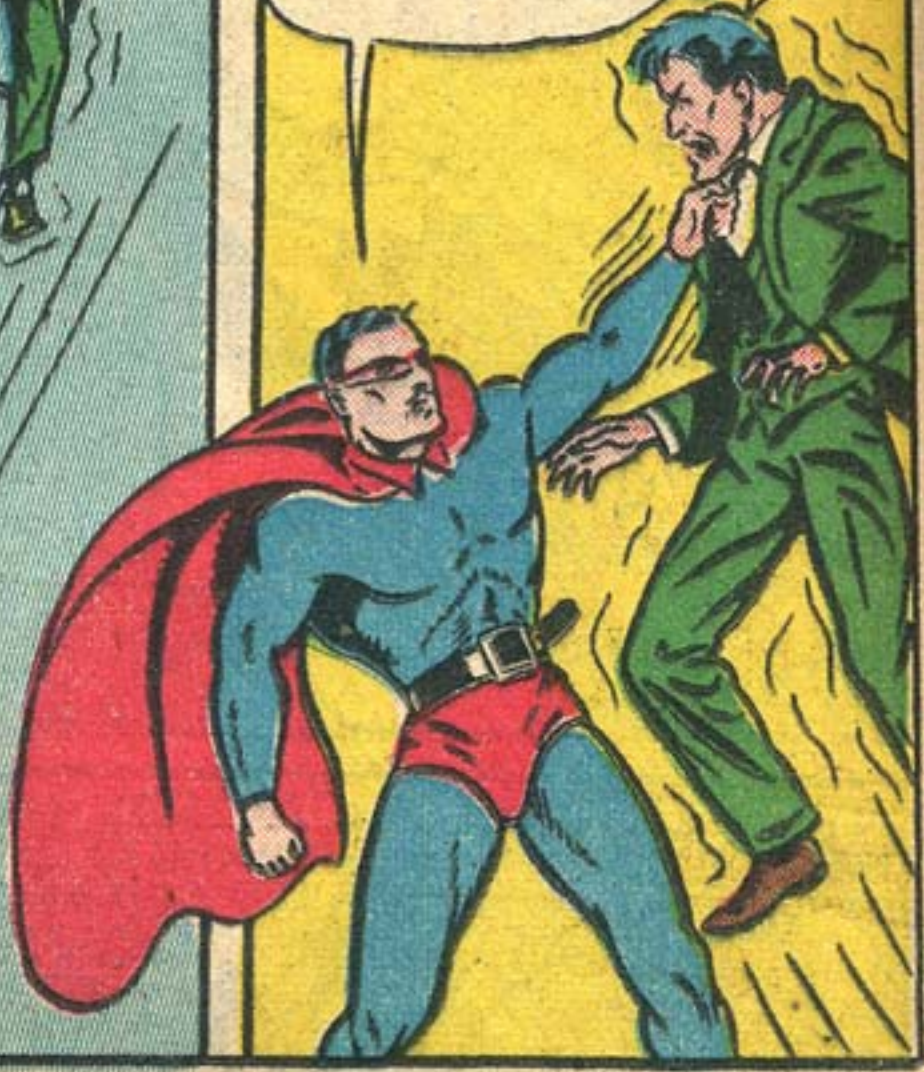
A SLIGHT WRENCH AND THE LADDER IS TORN FROM ITS FASTENINGS!



ST...STOP Y...YOU'LL SHAKE ME OFF!... I'LL COME DOWN!



ALL RIGHT NOW, GIVE OUT... OR YOU'LL WISH I HAD SHAKEN YOU OFF THE LADDER! WHO'S BEHIND THE PURPLE MAFIA? I...I'LL TELL EVERYTHING



I DON'T KNOW NUTHIN' ABOUT NO PURPLE MAFIA, HONEST! SOME GUY IN A MASK GIMME A FEW BUCKS TO TOSS A KNIFE INTO THE ROOM! THAT'S THE TRUTH, SO HELP ME!



THE WIZARD RETURNS TO THE POLICE WITH HIS CAPTIVES!



HE TELLS ME HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE PURPLE MAFIA! THESE RATS ALWAYS PLAY DUMB!



A LITTLE WORKING OVER'LL LOOSEN HIS TONGUE! I'LL HAVE A CONFESSION IN NO TIME!



MEANWHILE! MOE! WHAT ON EARTH IS THE MATTER WITH YOU?



OH, THAT'S TOO BAD! AND JUST WHEN I NEEDED YOUR HELP BADLY, TOO!

I TOLD YOU I WUZZ OKAY, DIDN'T I? ANYTIME I CAN'T HELP OUT A PAL BECAUSE OF A LITTLE COLD, LET ME KNOW!



THAT'S FINE! BECAUSE I WANT YOU TO GO TO THE MORGUE WITH ME AND....

THE MORGUE! DID YOU SAY THE MORGUE!



WHY YES... WHO... WHY MOE? WHAT'S THE MATTER?



I... I'M A LOT SICKER THAN I THOUGHT, HONEST I AM!

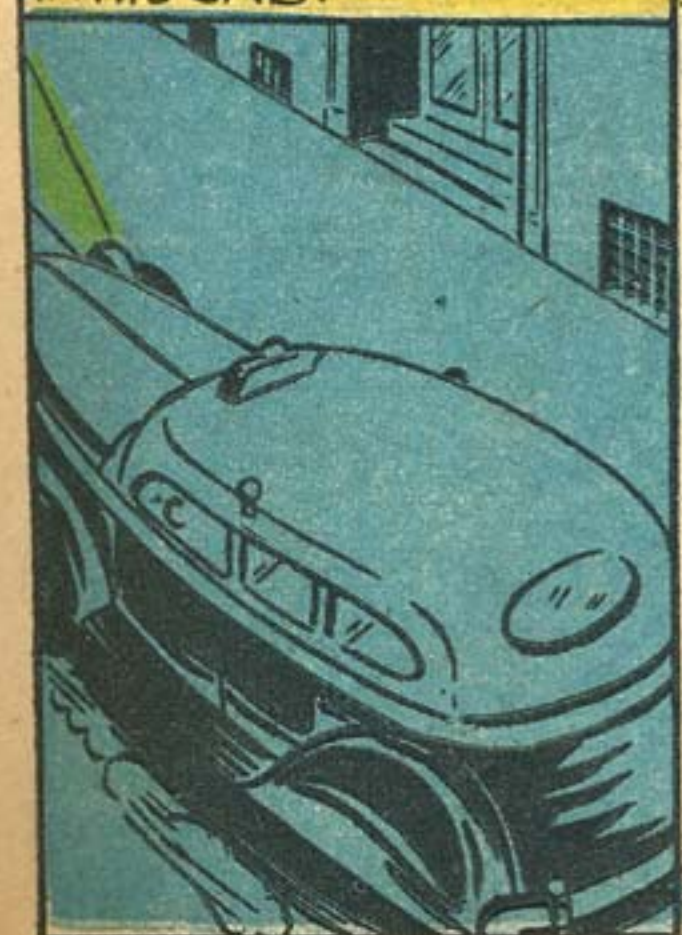
OH, DON'T BE SUCH AN OLD LADY! THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF!

DON'T BOTHER DRESSING, NO TIME FOR THAT! JUST SLIP ON A COAT! AND FOR GOODNESS SAKE, STOP SUCKING ON THAT LEMON!



UMPH! GLUB! UGGH!

SPEEDILY, MOE AND JANE ARRIVE AT THE MORGUE IN HIS CAB!

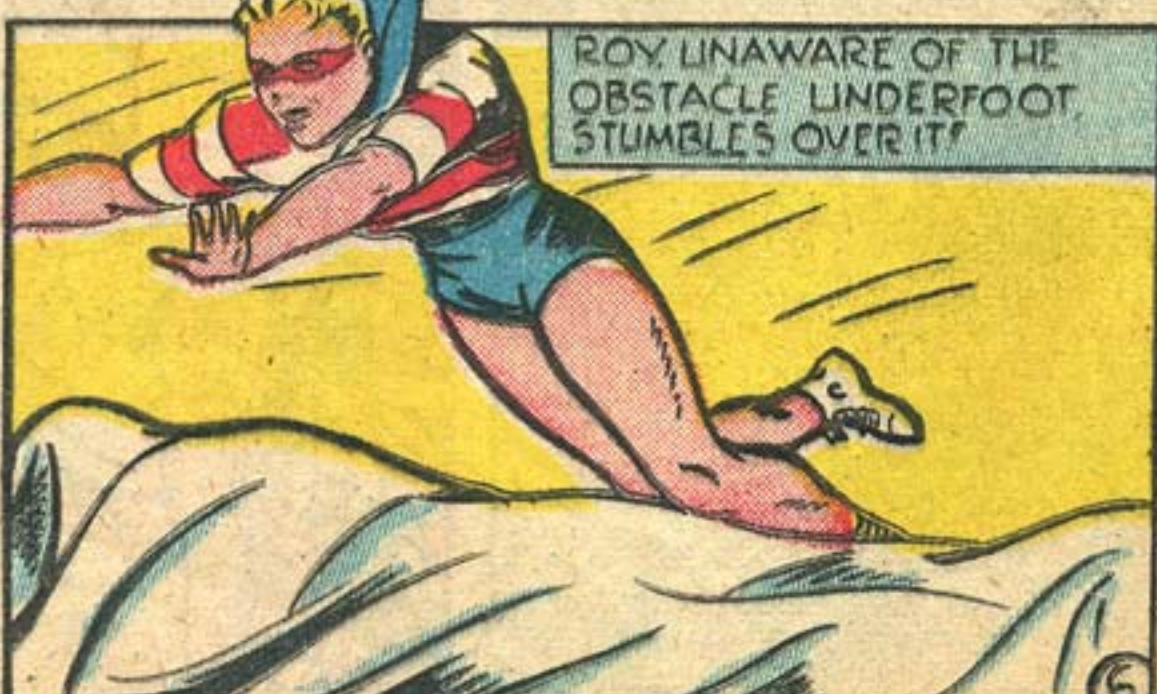
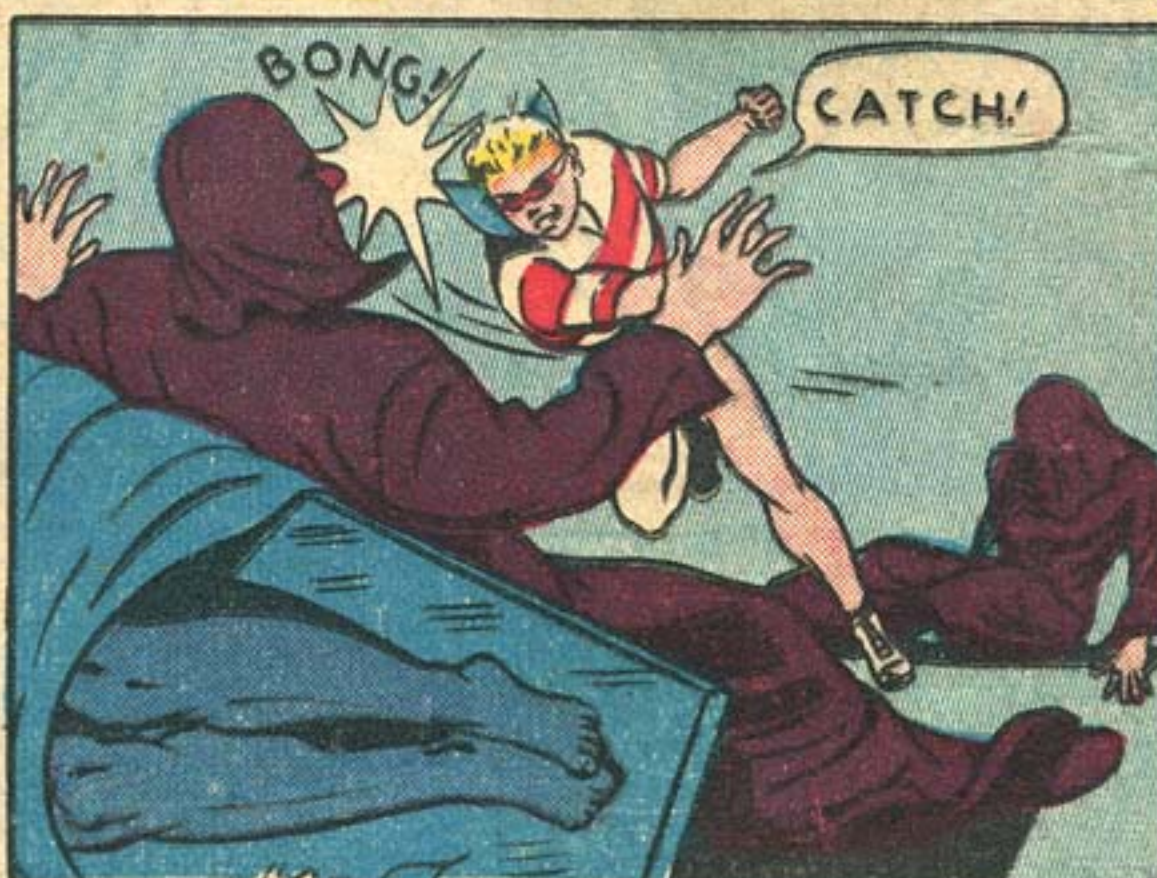


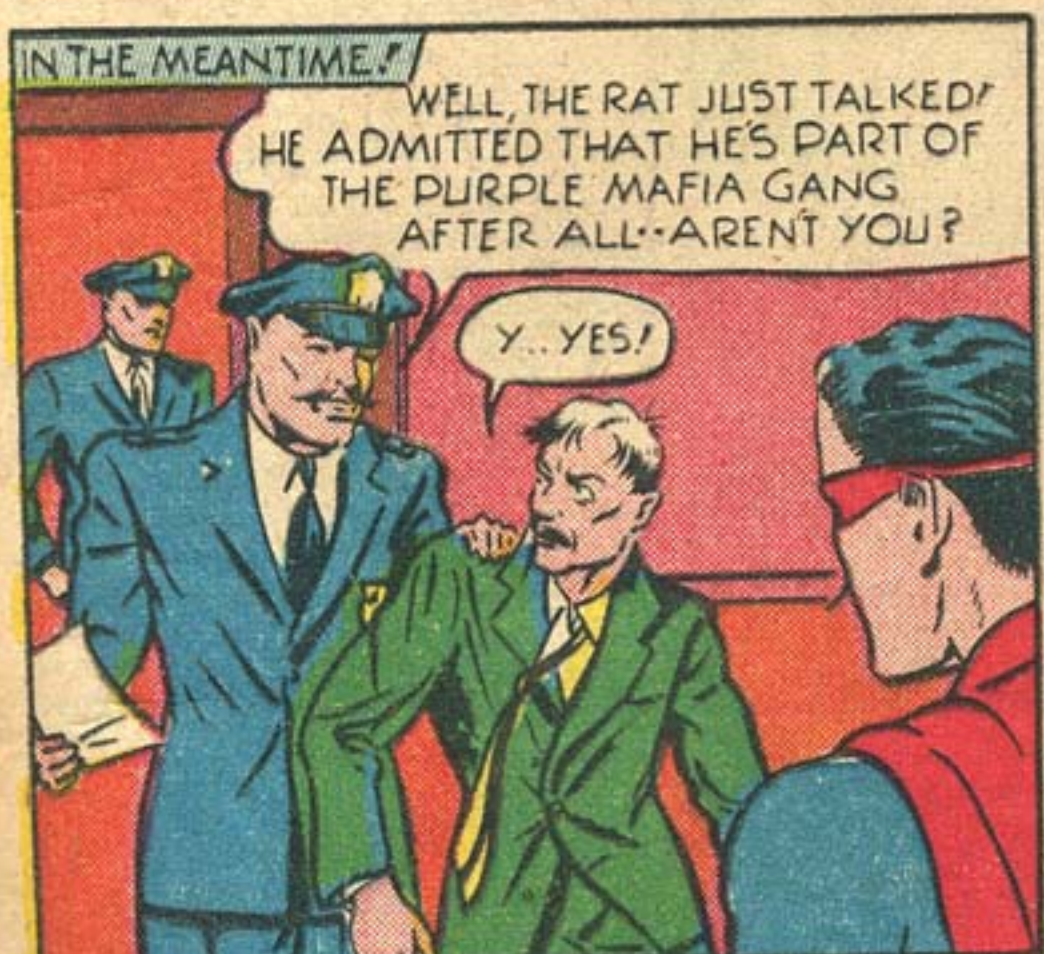
GIVE ME A BOOST UP, MOE! THE FRONT DOOR'S LOCKED!

GLUG! UGGLE!

INSIDE, JANE PLAYS THE FLASH-LIGHT BEAM, IN AN EFFORT TO LOCATE THE NEWLY ARRIVED CORPSE OF CALDWELL!









THE MURDERER'S NAME WAS WRITTEN ON CALDWELL'S ARM! AND I'M GOING TO GET HIM NOW!



WHILE IN THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE PURPLE MAFIA!

HERE COMES OUR LEADER, NOW!

I SEE YOU HAVE THE BODY! GOOD! BUT THOSE OTHER TWO! WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE?



THEY WERE ALSO LOOKING FOR CALDWELL'S BODY! I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT TO ASK THEM SOME QUESTIONS!



NO! THEY CAN'T POSSIBLY KNOW ANYTHING! KILL THEM NOW!

ALL RIGHT!



IT'S A SLIM CHANCE BUT IF THE WIZARD IS NEARBY, HIS SUPER-BRAIN MAY PICK UP MY CALL FOR HELP IN TIME!



ROY'S PLAN SUCCEEDS - PARTIALLY!

I HEAR A CRY! IT'S ROY! HE'S IN TROUBLE! I'LL CALL UP A VISION!



JUPITER! JANE AND ROY!

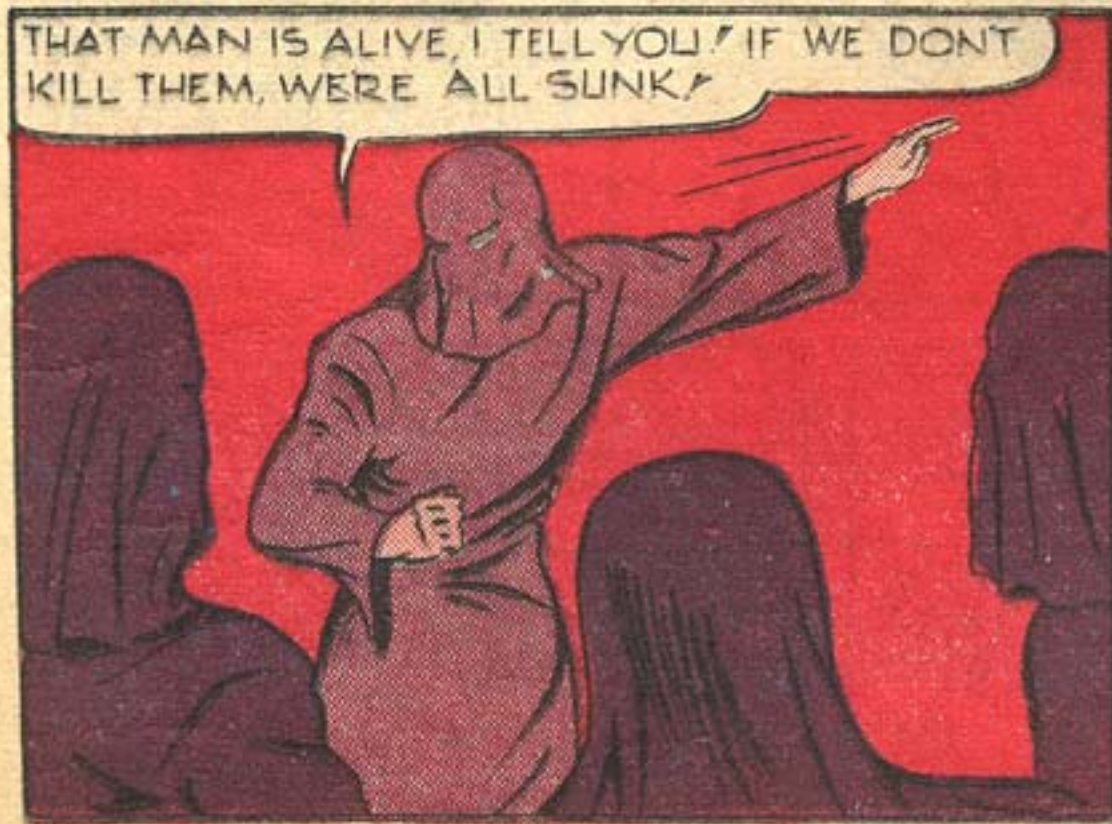
THEY'RE ABOUT TO BE KILLED! AND IT'S TOO LATE FOR ME TO SAVE THEM!



WHAT'S THAT! SOMEBODY WITH A SHEET OVER HIM IS SITTING UP AND SCARING THOSE BIRDS SILLY!



I DON'T KNOW WHO'S UNDER THAT SHEET, BUT HE'S GIVEN ME TIME TO RESCUE THEM!





NOW TO UNTIE YOU! I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY MORE FIGHT LEFT IN THEM!



THE WIZARD UNMASKS THE GANG!

HMM! JUST AS I THOUGHT! RECOGNIZE ANY OF THEM, JANE?

GOOD HEAVENS! YES! THOSE ARE THE MOST NOTORIOUS GANGSTERS IN THE CITY! SO THEY'RE THE PURPLE MAFIA GANG?



NO! THERE IS NO PURPLE MAFIA. JUST THIS GANG OF BIG SHOT CROOKS HEADED BY LIEUTENANT CARSON! CALDWELL GOT WISE TO HIM, SO CARSON KILLED HIM AND MANUFACTURED THAT MAFIA BUSINESS TO THROW US OFF!

BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS?



CALDWELL MUST HAVE SEEN HIS KILLERS COMING AND SCRIBBLED CARSON'S NAME ON HIS ARM! THE INVISIBLE INK CAME UP WHEN SOMEBODY SQUIRTED LEMON JUICE ON IT! I WENT TO THE POLICE AND TOLD THEM TO FOLLOW ME HERE! THEY'RE PROBABLY ON THEIR WAY NOW!

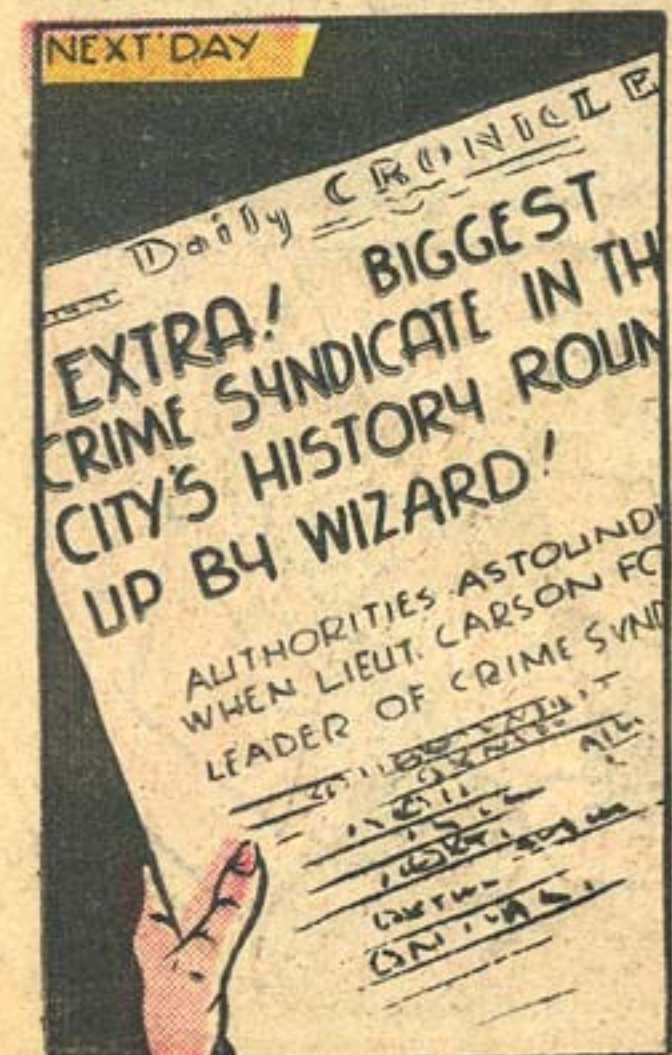


ROY! HE'S GOT THE LEADER 'LIEUT CARSON!

HE WAS TRYIN' TO COP A SNEAK WIZARD, OUT THE BACK DOOR!



HERE COME THE POLICE NOW! I GUESS OUR JOB'S DONE! SO LONG!



EXTRA! BIGGEST CRIME SYNDICATE IN THE CITY'S HISTORY ROUNDED UP BY WIZARD!

AUTHORITIES ASTOUNDED WHEN LIEUT. CARSON FOUND LEADER OF CRIME SYNDICATE!



THERE'S A SCOOP THAT'LL SELL A MILLION PAPERS FOR YOU BLANE!

OH! OH! THAT SOUNDS LIKE I'M BEING TAPPED FOR A RAISE!

SHE DESERVES IT MR. WHITNEY!



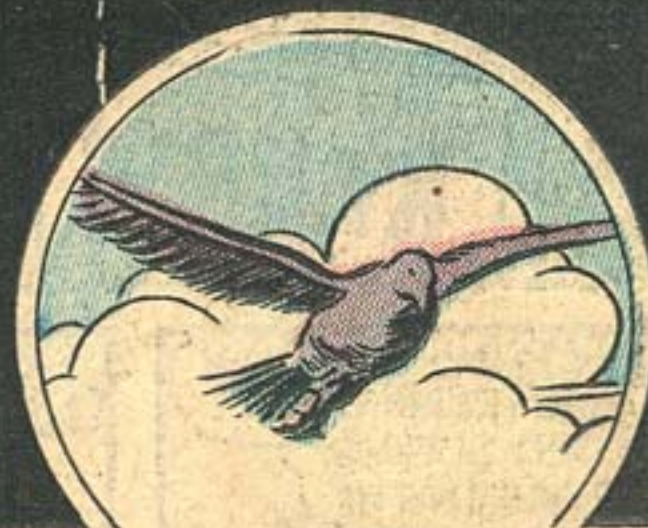
NO, I'M NOT GOING TO ASK FOR A RAISE! BUT I SUGGEST YOU GET THE WIZARD AND GIVE HIM ONE! HE DOES ALL YOUR WORK ANYWAY!

HMM! MAYBE I OUGHT TO PUT HIM ON THE PAYROLL AT THAT. EH ROY!

THE ORIGINAL SHIELD AND DUSTY THE BOY DETECTIVE APPEAR **ONLY** IN PEP comics AND SHIELD-WIZARD comics

Fran FRAZER

IN A HOTEL ROOM IN SINGAPORE, HOT-BED OF JAPANESE INTRIGUE, A HIGH POWERED TELESCOPE IS TRAINED ON A BIRD IN FLIGHT! AND THE OCCUPANTS OF THE ROOM SIT TENSELY AS THE BIRD WINGS ITS WAY TOWARD THE OCEAN!



'IS WOE' IS MUCH WOE.' OUR PIGEON IS DESCENDING! WE MUST FOLLOW AND RETRIEVE BEFORE HOSTILE EYES CAN SEE!

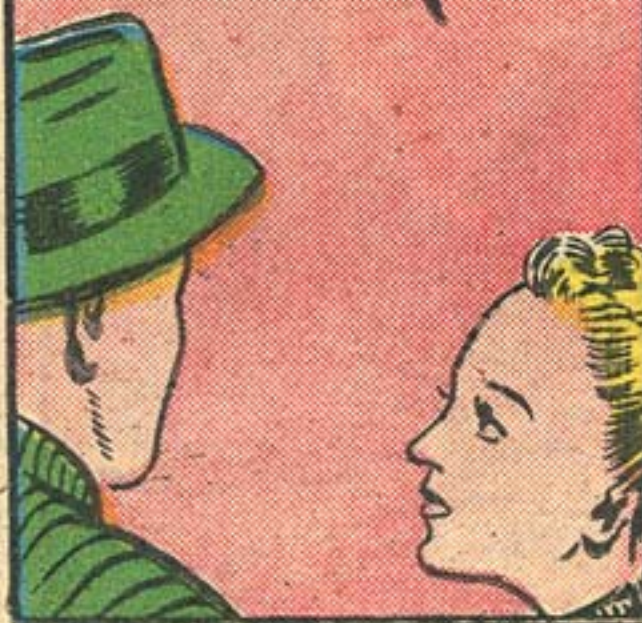


AT THAT MOMENT, FRAN FRAZER AND HAL-DAVIS ARE IN THE PARK FEEDING PIGEONS!



LOOK, FRAN! ANOTHER MOUTH TO FEED!

HAL! THAT'S A HOMING PIGEON! AND THERE'S A NOTE TIED TO ITS LEG!



HERE LITTLE BIRDIE! COME TO POPPA! NICE SIX COURSE DINNER TODAY, FREE FOR PIGEONS.



HAL REACHES OUT GRABS AT A WING, BUT THE PIGEON FLUTTERS FROM HIS GRASP!



I MUST HAVE DAMAGED ITS WING! IT CAN'T FLY, I'LL CATCH IT!



DANG NAB THAT ORNERY PIGEON IT WOULD LOSE ITSELF IN A CROWD!



WHEW! GETTING THROUGH THAT MOB REMINDED ME OF MY OLD SUBWAY DAYS BACK IN THE STATES!



THE CHASE CONTINUES.....



HOW'D THAT FENCE GET HAL! THE PIGEON! WE'VE CORNERED IT BY THE LAKE!



GOTCHA NOW!



HIS MOMENTUM CARRIES HIM INTO THE LAKE!



A FINE TIME TO GO SWIMMING! COME OUT OF THERE! NEVER MIND THE WISE CRACKS!



HAL DIVES AT THE ELUSIVE PIGEON, AND...



YOU WERE RIGHT
FRAN! IT'S A
MESSAGE ALL
RIGHT!



WHAT'S IT
SAY, HAL?

DRAT THE LUCK!
IT'S WRITTEN IN JAP.
ANESE!



BUT IT MUST BE IM-
PORTANT, OR A HOMING
PIGEON WOULDN'T BE
CARRYING
IT!



AND IF IT IS, LITTLE GIRL, I'VE GOT
ME A SCOOP! AND THIS TIME,
YOU'RE NOT HORNING IN! I'LL
TAKE IT RIGHT DOWN TO THE
OFFICE AND HAVE IT TRANS-
LATED!



MUCH SORRY TO CHANGE HON-
ORABLE MIND! WILL PLEASE TO
HAND OVER MESSAGE!



MUCH SORRY TO CHANGE
HONORABLE PROFILE!
BUT MUST DO!



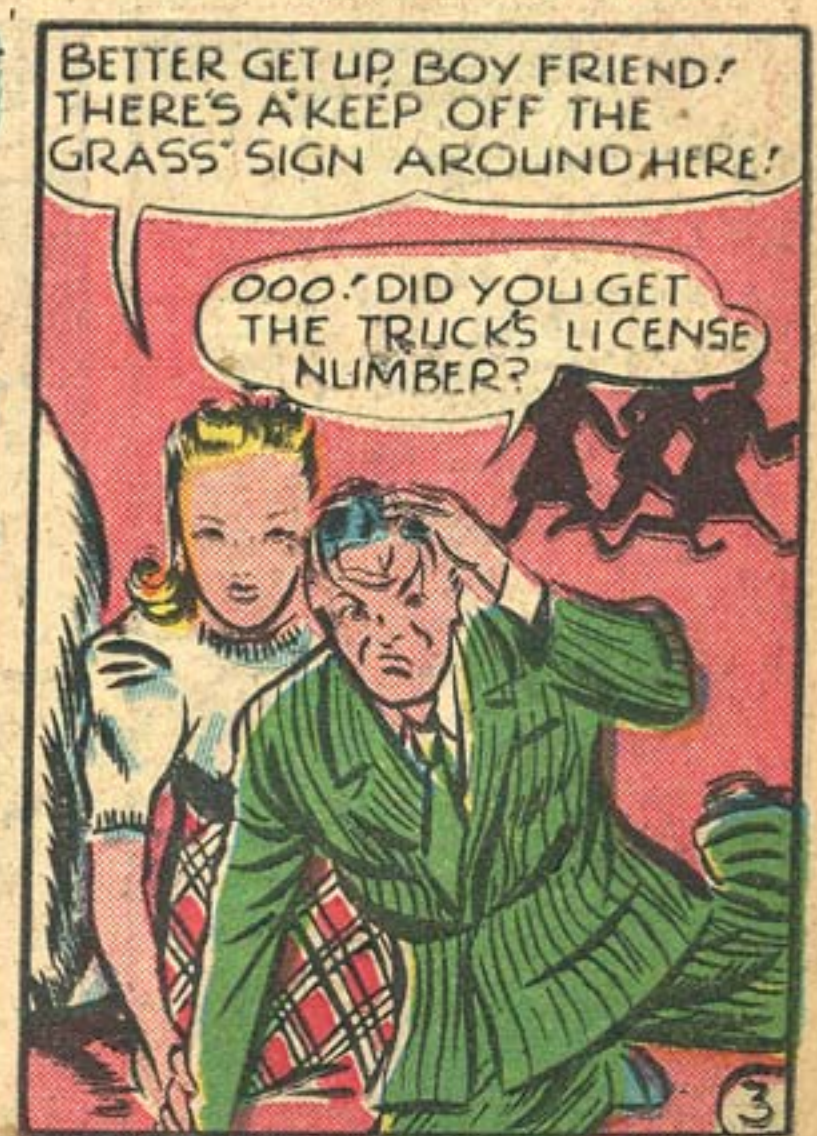
KEEP PUNCHING
HAL! I'LL
HANDLE MY
END!

BONG!



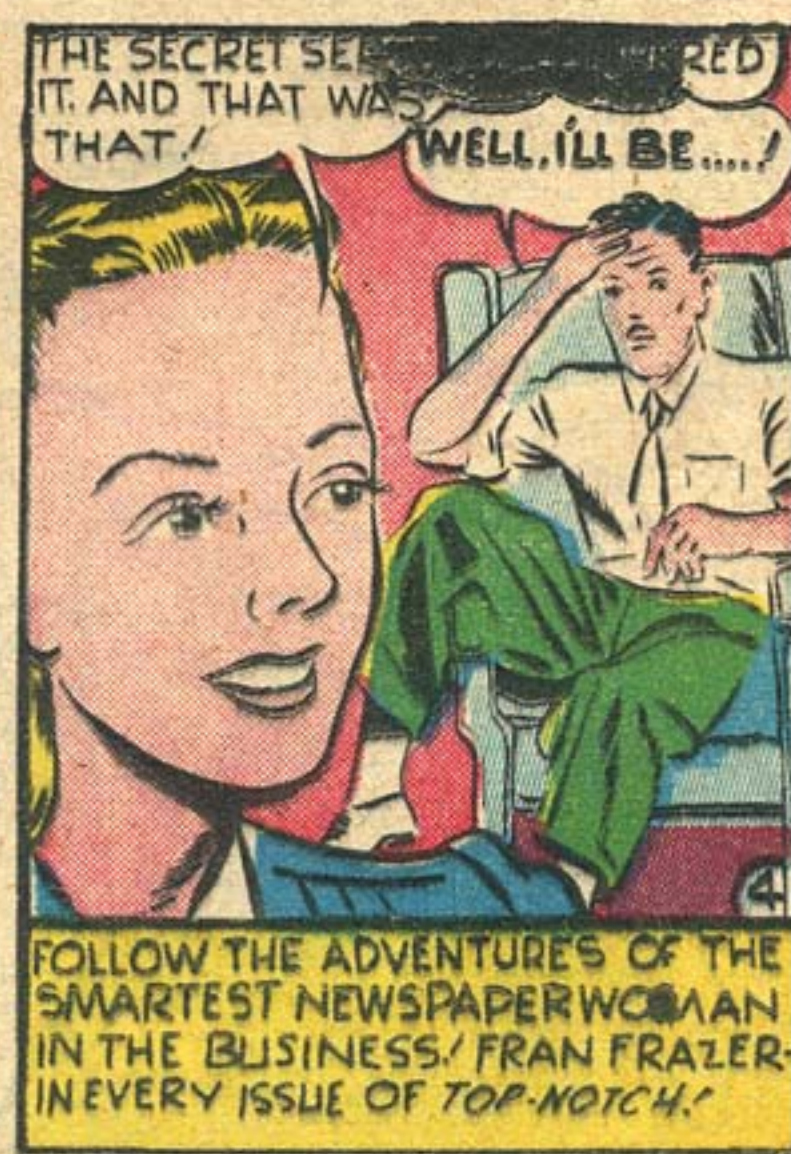
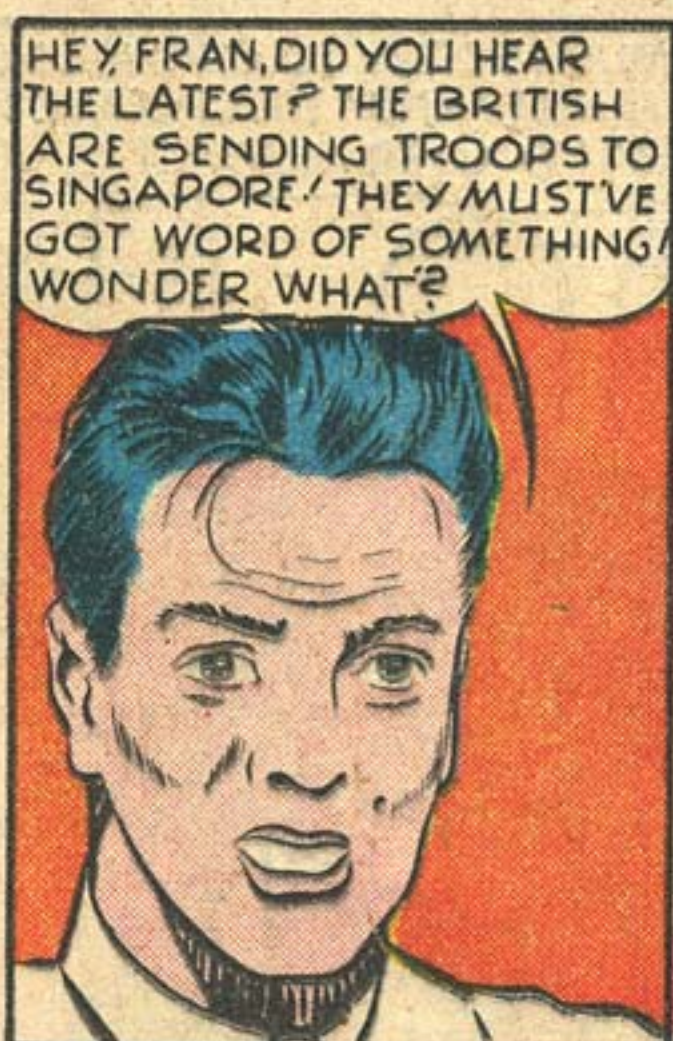
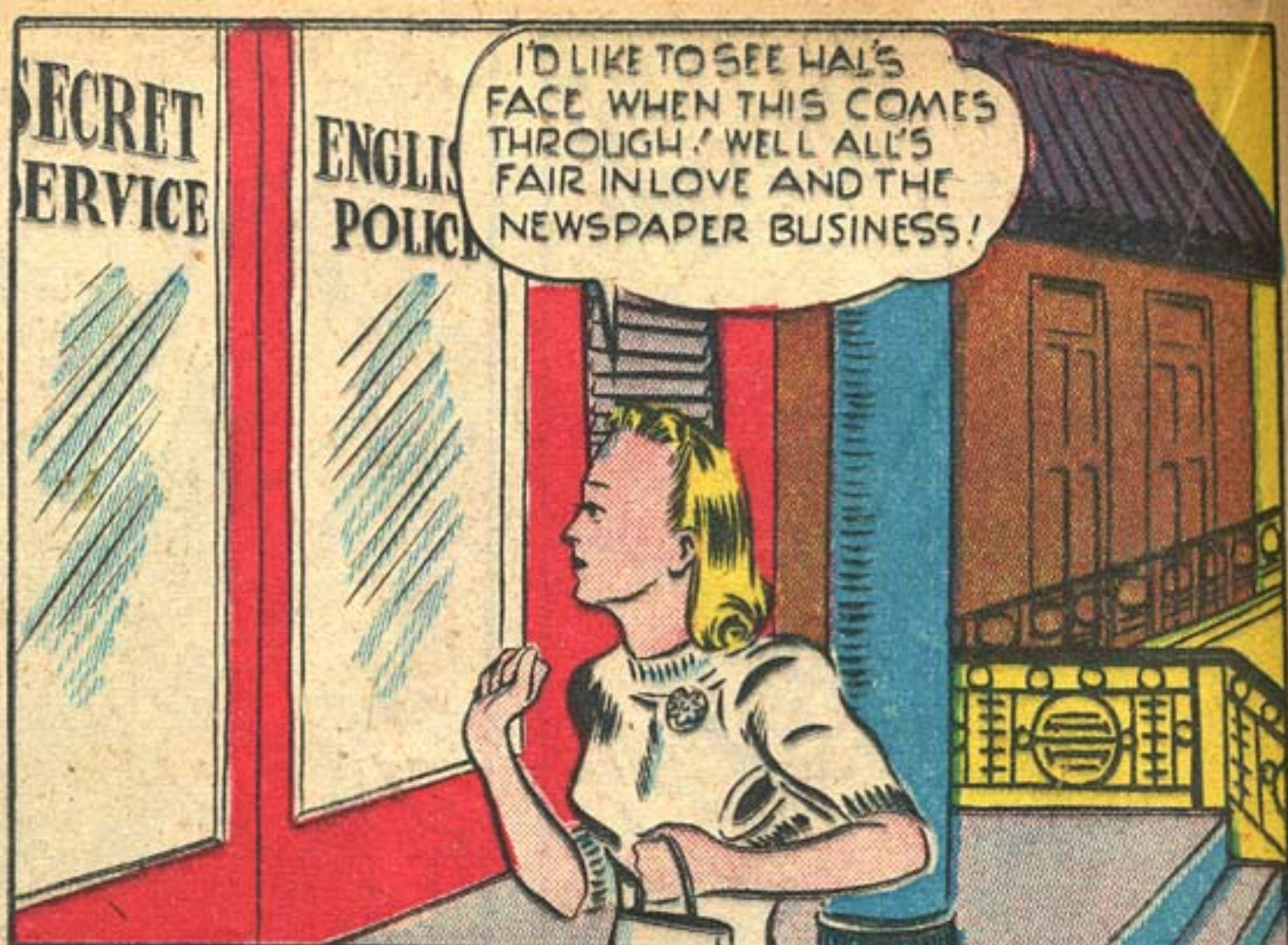
HAL IS SUDDENLY CAUGHT
OFF GUARD, AND...

BOP!



BETTER GET UP, BOY FRIEND!
THERE'S A 'KEEP OFF THE
GRASS' SIGN AROUND HERE!

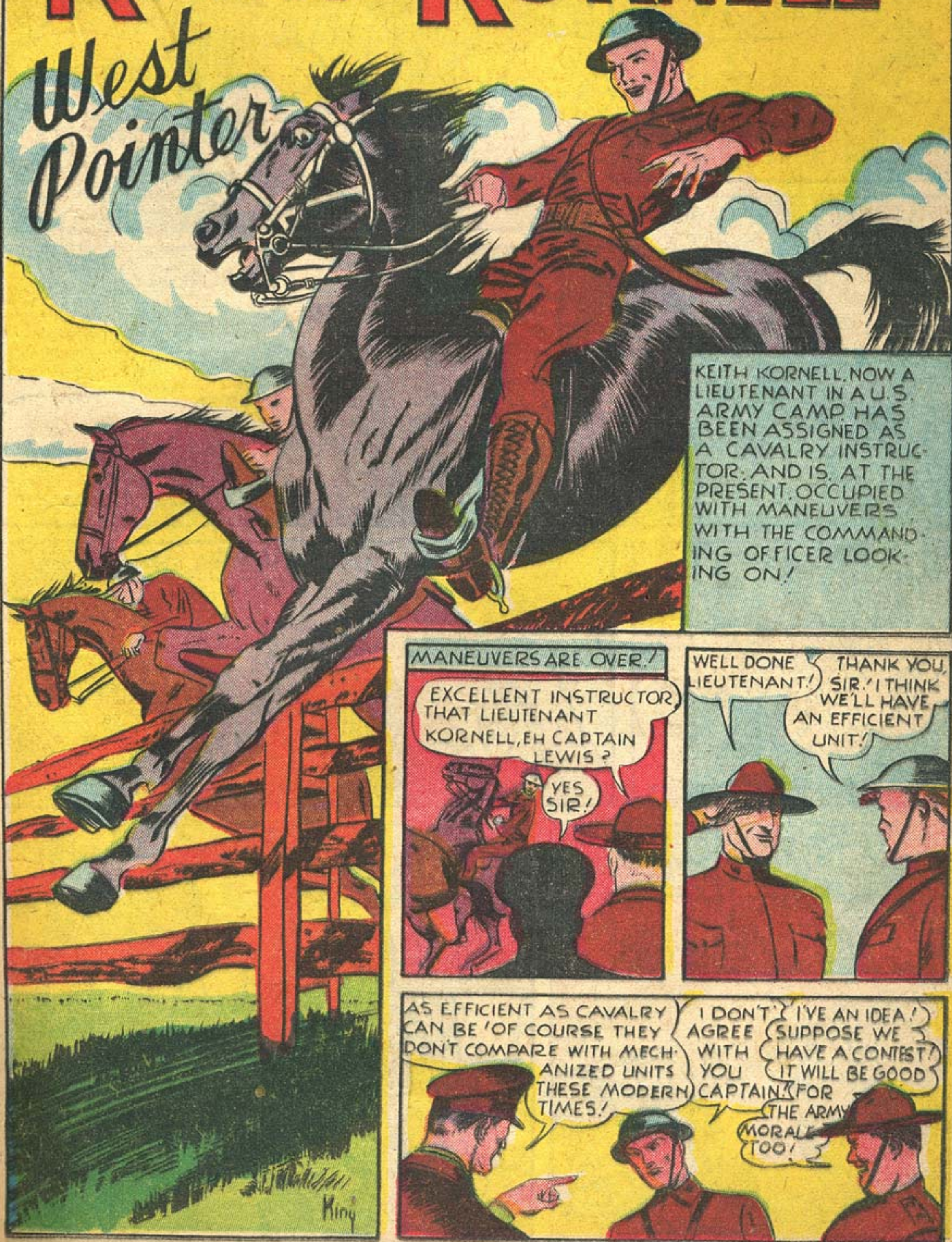
OOO! DID YOU GET
THE TRUCK'S LICENSE
NUMBER?



FOLLOW THE ADVENTURES OF THE SMARTEST NEWSPAPERWOMAN IN THE BUSINESS! FRAN FRAZER IN EVERY ISSUE OF TOP-NOTCH!

KEITH KORNELL

West Pointer



KEITH KORNELL, NOW A LIEUTENANT IN A U.S. ARMY CAMP HAS BEEN ASSIGNED AS A CAVALRY INSTRUCTOR. AND IS, AT THE PRESENT, OCCUPIED WITH MANEUVERS WITH THE COMMANDING OFFICER LOOKING ON!

MANEUVERS ARE OVER!

EXCELLENT INSTRUCTOR THAT LIEUTENANT KORNELL, EH CAPTAIN LEWIS?

YES SIR!

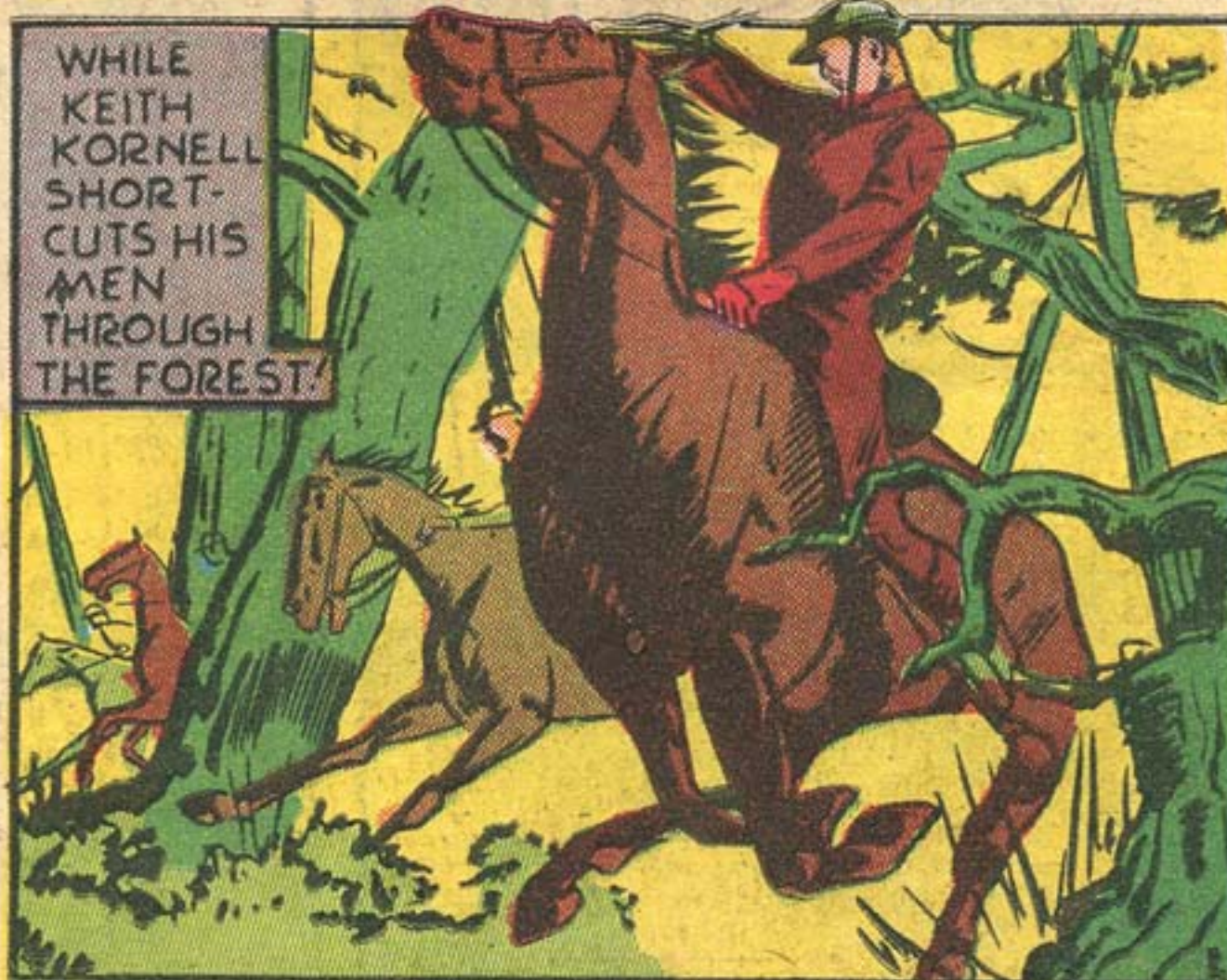
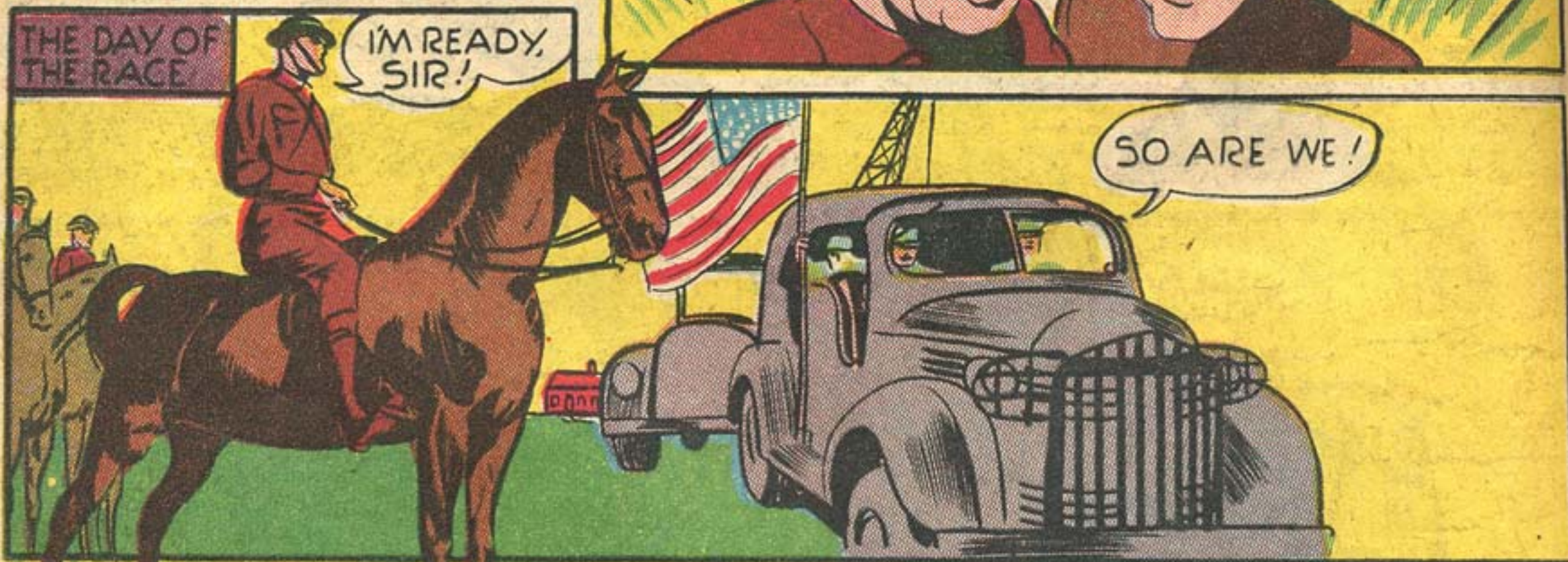
WELL DONE LIEUTENANT!

THANK YOU, SIR. I THINK WE'LL HAVE AN EFFICIENT UNIT!

AS EFFICIENT AS CAVALRY CAN BE 'OF COURSE THEY DON'T COMPARE WITH MECHANIZED UNITS THESE MODERN TIMES!

I DON'T AGREE WITH YOU CAPTAIN. I'VE AN IDEA! SUPPOSE WE HAVE A CONTEST! IT WILL BE GOOD FOR THE ARMY MORALE TOO!

King



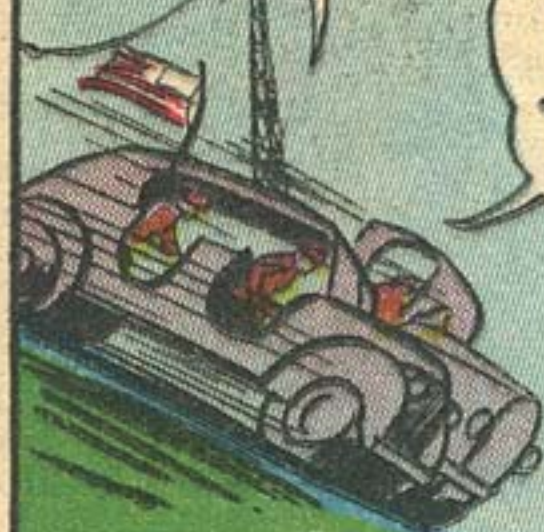
HA/HA/AT THIS RATE, WE'LL REACH THE MOUNTAIN PASS IN NO TIME! POOR LIEUTENANT KORNELL, HE REALLY THOUGHT HIS HORSES COULD BEAT US!



JUST THEN...

HEY! THAT MUD AHEAD! WATCH OUT!

I CAN'T STOP THE TRUCK IN TIME, SIR!



IT'S NO USE, CAPTAIN! WE'RE STUCK!



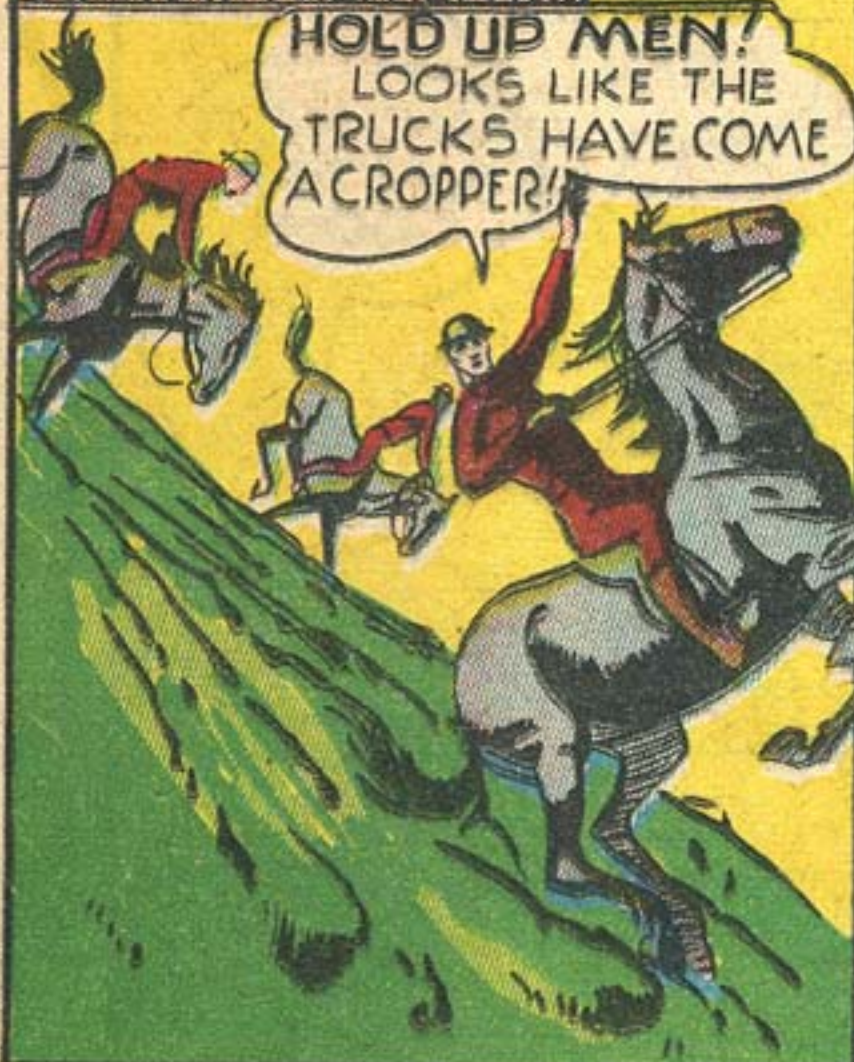
WELL, YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF THE EMERGENCY REPAIR TRUCK! WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO, SIR! OUR TRUCK IS BOGGED IN ALSO!



AT THAT MOMENT...

HOLD UP MEN! LOOKS LIKE THE TRUCKS HAVE COME A CROPPER!



BOGGED IN, EH CAPTAIN LEWIS! WELL, WE DON'T WANT TO WIN THAT WAY, SO WE'LL TOW YOU OUT!



KEITH'S MEN DISMOUNT, AND THE HORSES TOW THE TRUCKS ONTO DRY ROAD!



THAT WAS SPORTING OF YOU, LIEUTENANT!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, CAPTAIN! SO LONG!



ONWARD THROUGH THE FORESTS,
THE CAVALRY SPEEDS!



UNTIL



KEEP YOUR HORSES
FROM STRUGGLING,
MEN, OR THEY'LL SINK
DEEPER! I'LL RIDE
ONTO THE ROAD AND
SEE IF I CAN INTER-
CEPT THE
TRUCKS!



LATER....



THE HORSES ARE
QUICKLY RES-
CUED!



WELL CAPTAIN,
THAT EVENS
THE SCORE!
FROM NOW
ON IT'S A
RACE TO
THE FINISH!

AND
MAY THE
BEST MEN
WIN!



THAT'LL BE
US CAPTAIN!!!
WE'LL BE WAIT-
ING FOR YOU
THERE!

THAT'S
WHAT
YOU SAY,
BUT
DON'T
BET ON IT!



AFTER SOME HOURS OF
HARD RIDING!



GREAT SCOT! THE TRUCKS ARE ALREADY THERE!... AND THE INFANTRY IS CLIMBING UP THE SLOPES!



COME ON! WE STILL HAVE A CHANCE! OUR HORSES CAN GET UP QUICKER THAN THE MEN CAN CLIMB!



A MAD RACE ENSUES

HOORAY! WE'RE GAINING ON THEM FAST!



THE INFANTRY GAINS THE SUMMIT AT EXACTLY THE SAME MOMENT AS THE HORSES!

IT'S A TIE, LIEUTENANT!

YES CAPTAIN, THAT'S ONE FOR THE BOOKS, ALLRIGHT!



CAPTAIN LEWIS AND LIEUTENANT KORNEILL, REPORT BACK TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER

GUESS WE'LL NEVER KNOW WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT NOW, SIR!

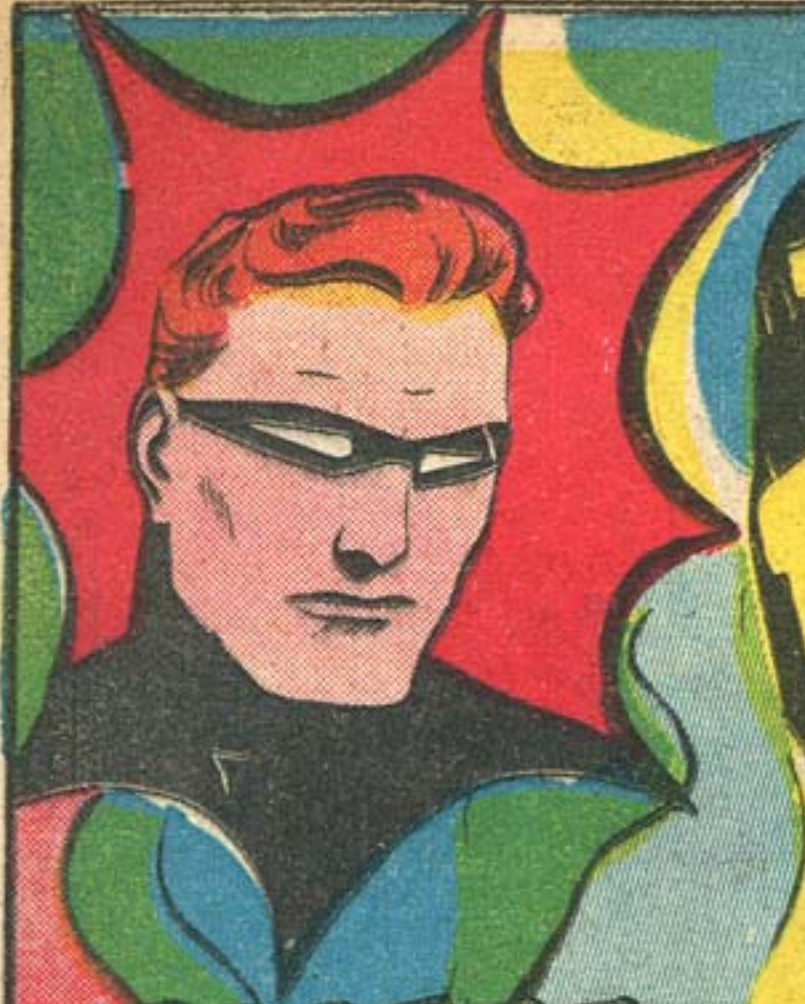


AND THAT IS THAT EACH ARE VERY IMPORTANT APART - BUT MUCH MORE SO TOGETHER, HELPING EACH OTHER, EH MEN!

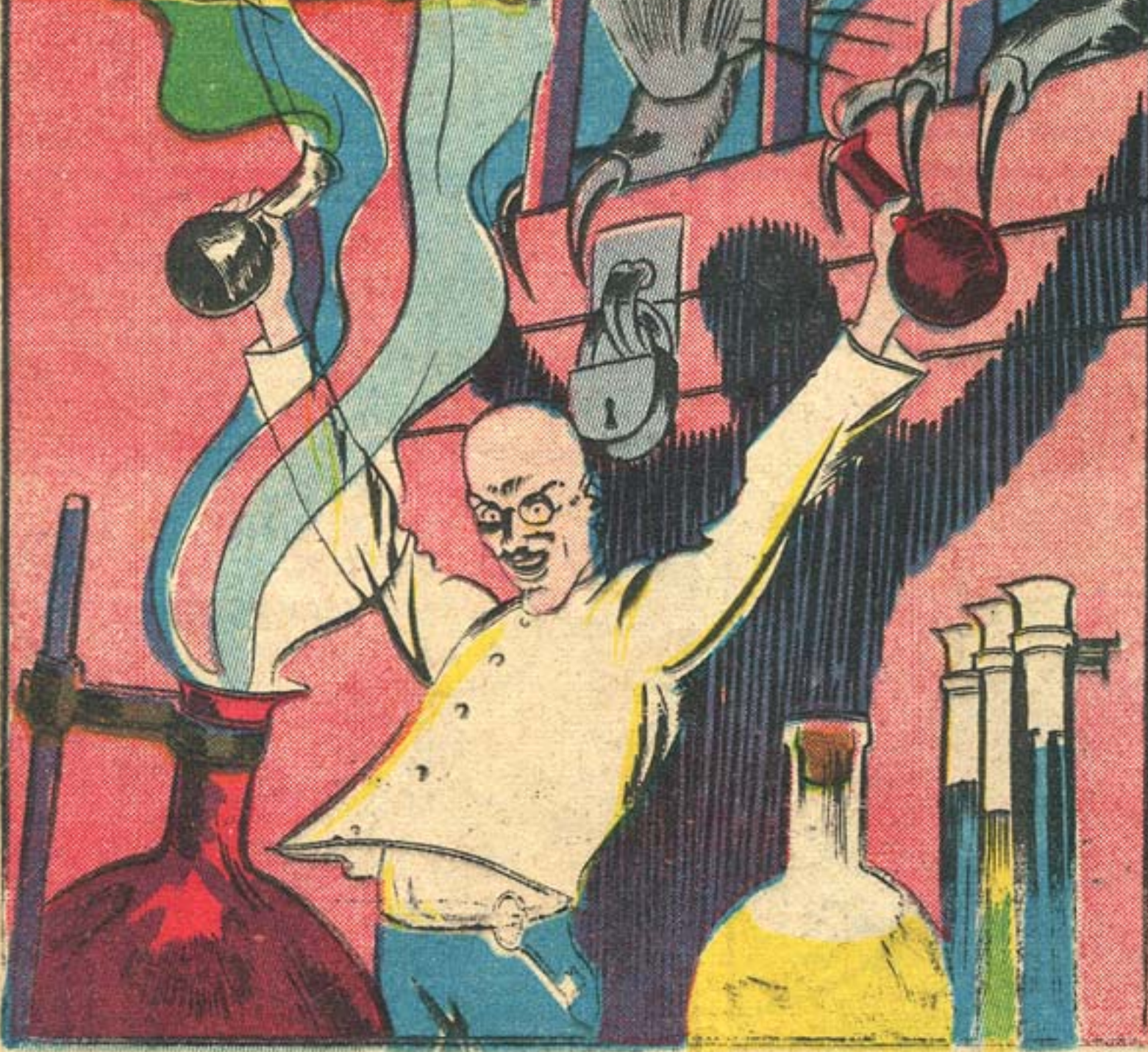
RIGHT SIR! WORKING TOGETHER, THAT'S WHAT MAKES A REAL ARMY!



THE FIREFLY



IN AN ABANDONED SUBWAY SPUR, A SCIENTIST COMPLETES HIS EXPERIMENTS ON A RARE FORMULA: A SERUM WHICH, WHEN INJECTED INTO THE VEINS OF ANIMALS, CAUSES THEM TO GROW TO HUGE PROPORTIONS. THE DEMONIAL SCIENTIST SHOUTS IN GLEE AT THE RESULTS OF HIS EXPERIMENT: A RAT AS BIG AS AN ELEPHANT!



THE MAMMOTH RODENT LEAPS FROM ITS CAGE.....



A FEW BLOCKS AWAY, HARLEY HUDSON IS STROLLING WITH JOAN BURTON...

HOW'D YOU LIKE TO TAKE IN A MOVIE, JOAN?

I'D LOVE TO, HARLEY!

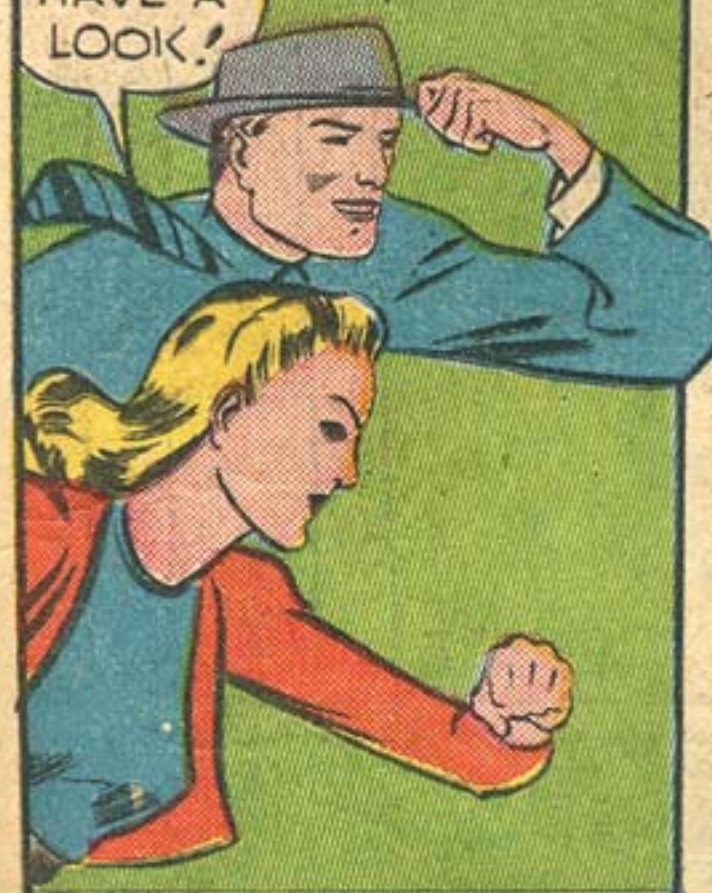


AT THAT INSTANT...



WHAT'S ALL THE RACKET? SOUNDS LIKE A RIOT AROUND THE CORNER!

LET'S HAVE A LOOK!



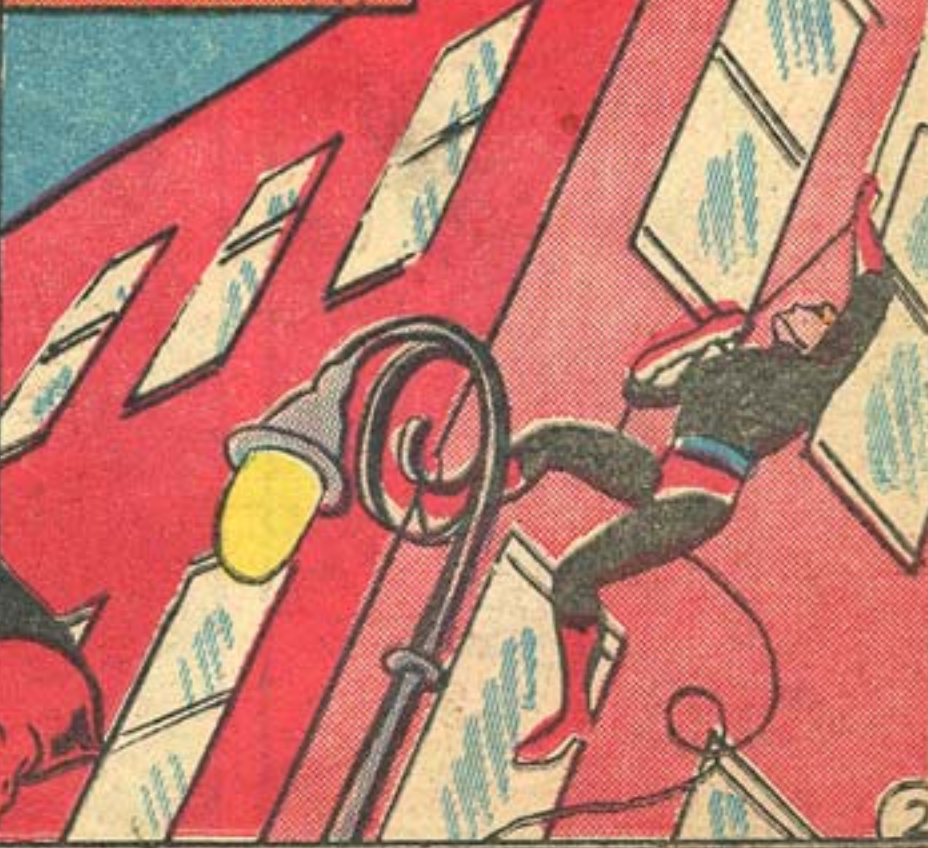
JOAN! LOOK... TH... THAT THING! IT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A HORROR MOVIE... QUICK! RUN OVER TO THAT BUILDING WHERE YOU'LL BE SAFE!



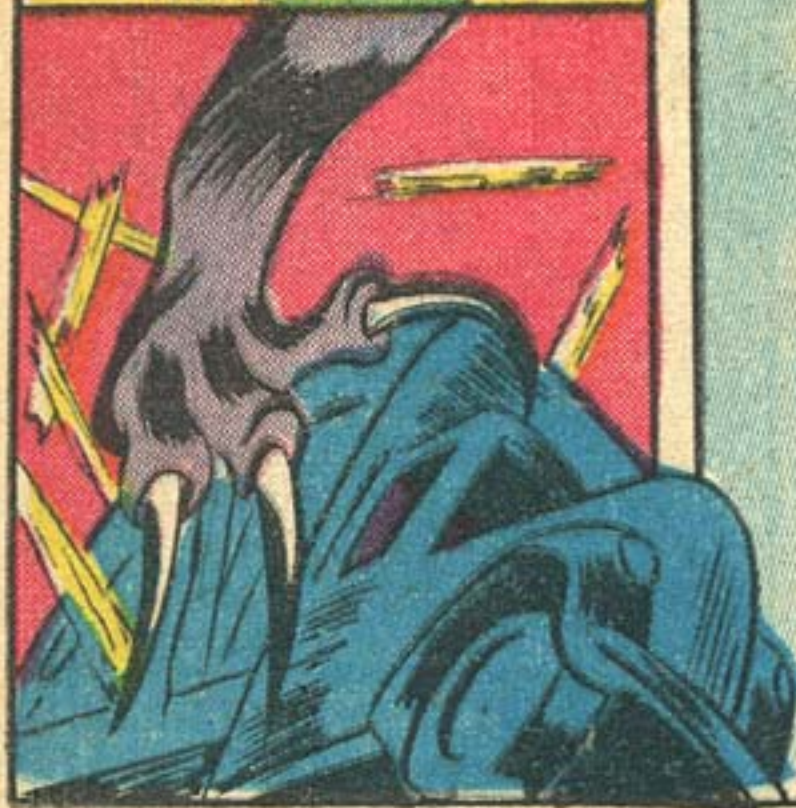
HARLEY HUDSON QUICKLY BECOMES THE FIREFLY...



... AND SWINGS UP THE SIDE OF A BUILDING...



AS THE GIGANTIC RAT ADVANCES UP THE STREET, CRUSHING CARS LIKE MATCH BOXES!



HERE IT COMES! I EITHER GET IT, OR IT GETS ME!



THE RODENT REARS UP ON ITS HIND LEGS, PUZZLED BY THE STRANGE FIGURE ON THE ROOF!



ATTA BOY! HOLD THAT POSE FOR ANOTHER MINUTE!



GOT HIM, BUT I'LL NEVER HOLD HIM, UNLESS...



MAYBE I CAN GET SOME LEVERAGE BY SWINGING THIS ROPE AROUND THE FLAG POLE!



BUT THE THRASHING AND STRUGGLING OF THE WEIRD CREATURE, SNAPS THE POLE LIKE A TOOTHPICK!



LOOPING THE ROPE AROUND A CHIMNEY, THE FIREFLY MAKES A MIGHTY LEAP TO THE ROOF OF AN ADJOINING BUILDING!



THE SCIENTIST EMERGES FROM HIS UNDERGROUND LABORATORY AND SEES...



WHO DID THIS TO MY CREATION? I'LL HAVE HIS LIFE!



I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHERE THAT THING CAME FROM!



THE FIREFLY RACES DOWN THE STREET...



BUT THE SCIENTIST RELEASES A GIANT CARRIER PIGEON!



HOLY HANNAH! FIRST, A RAT AS BIG AS A HOUSE... AND NOW, THIS... AND IT'S COMING RIGHT AT ME!



THE GREAT BIRD SWOOPS DOWN AND GRASPS THE FIREFLY IN ITS STEEL TALONS.



THEN, CIRCLING BACK, THE PIGEON CARRIES THE FIREFLY TOWARDS THE LABORATORY!



NO USE IN STRUGGLING. I'LL FIND OUT WHERE IT'S TAKING ME!

THE HUGE BIRD SOARS THROUGH THE ENTRANCE TO THE ABANDONED SUBWAY!



THE FIREFLY!



THE FIREFLY IS
DROPPED INTO
A CAGE...



SO... NOW YOU ARE
AT MY MERCY... AND I,
MEANWHILE, WILL CREATE
MORE GREAT BEASTS TO
OVER-RUN THE CITY!
SOON, I SHALL HAVE THE
CITY IN MY GRASP! WEALTH
AND POWER WILL BE
MY REWARD!



EVEN NOW...
I INJECT THIS
SERUM
INTO A
RAT...



...AND THEN I TOSS HIM
INTO THIS CAGE!.. NOW,
WATCH!.. IN A FEW
MOMENTS...



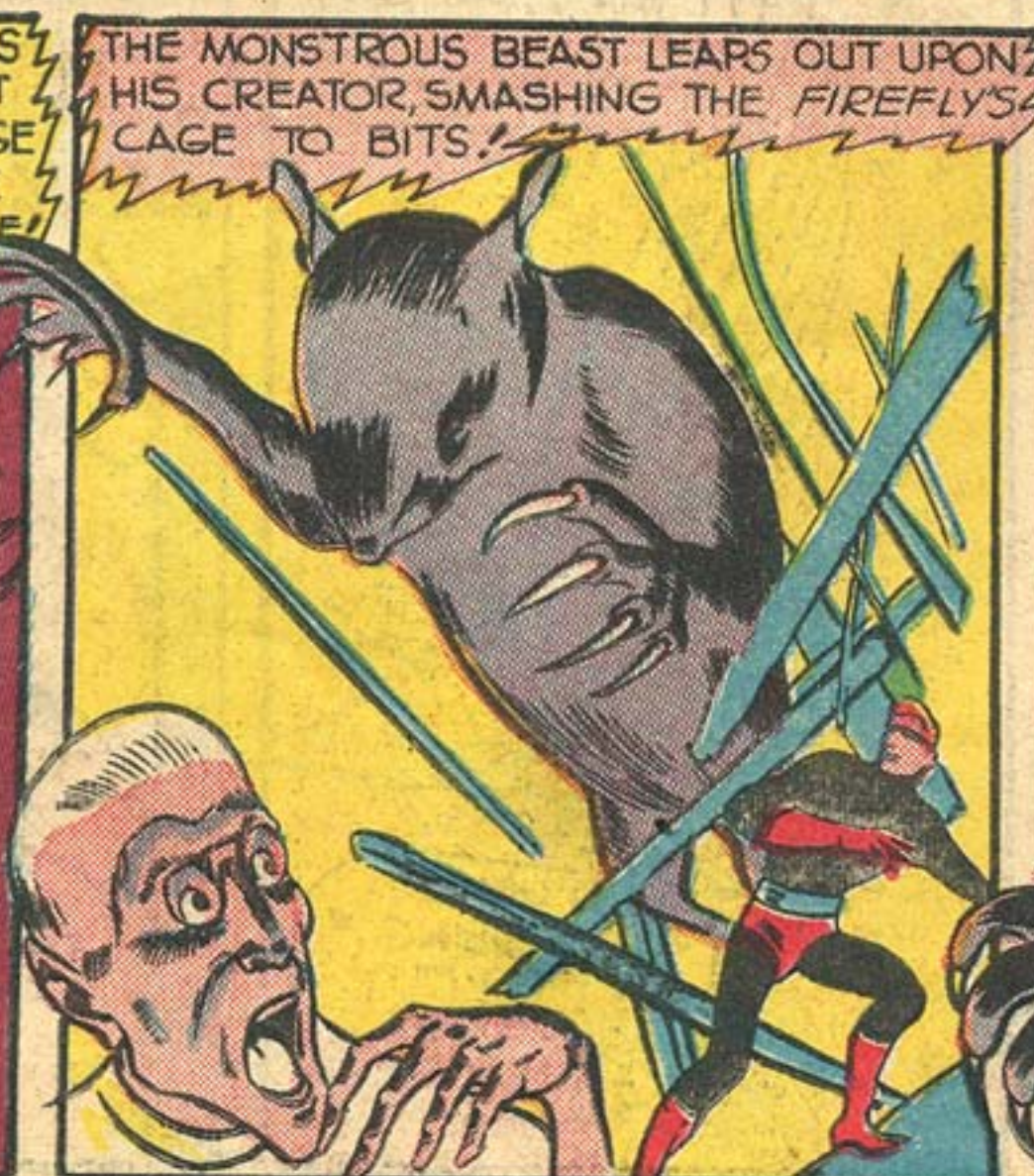
YOU SEE?.. ALREADY, HE
IS AS BIG AS A HORSE
AND HE HASN'T
STOPPED GROWING!



AS THE SCIENTIST TURNS
HIS BACK THE RODENT
PUSHES OPEN THE CAGE
DOOR ON WHICH THE
LOCK FAILED TO CLOSE!

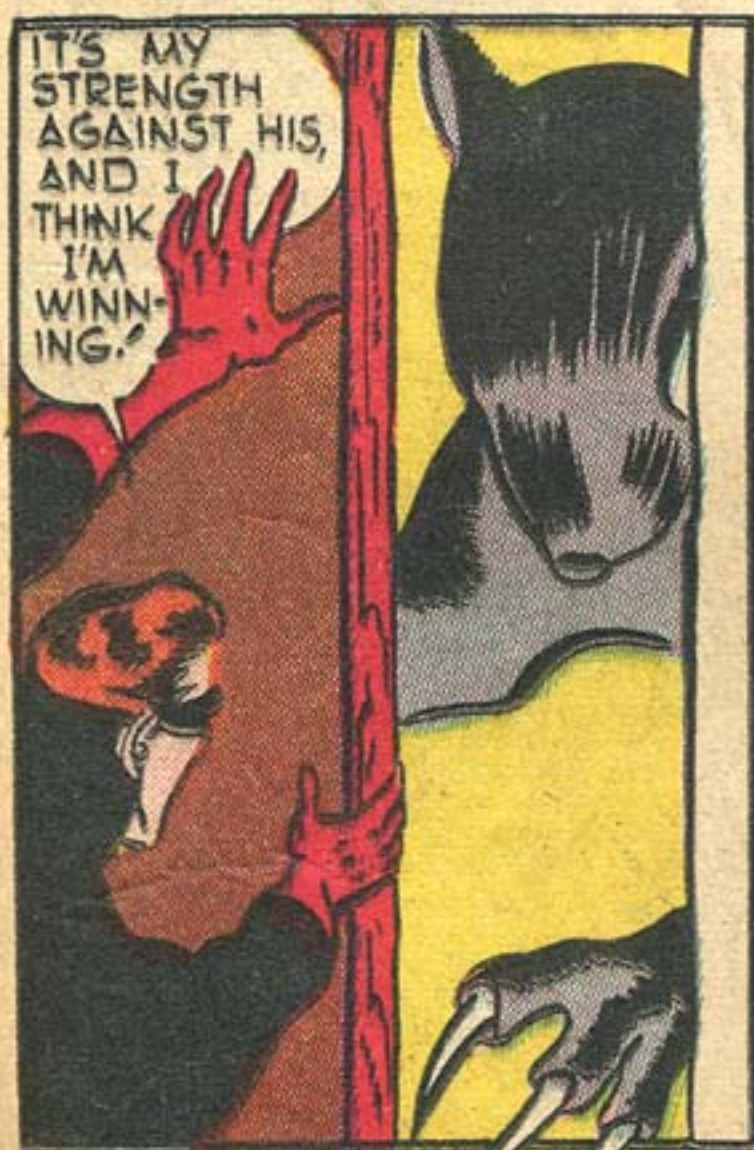


THE MONSTROUS BEAST LEAPS OUT UPON
HIS CREATOR, SMASHING THE FIREFLY'S
CAGE TO BITS!



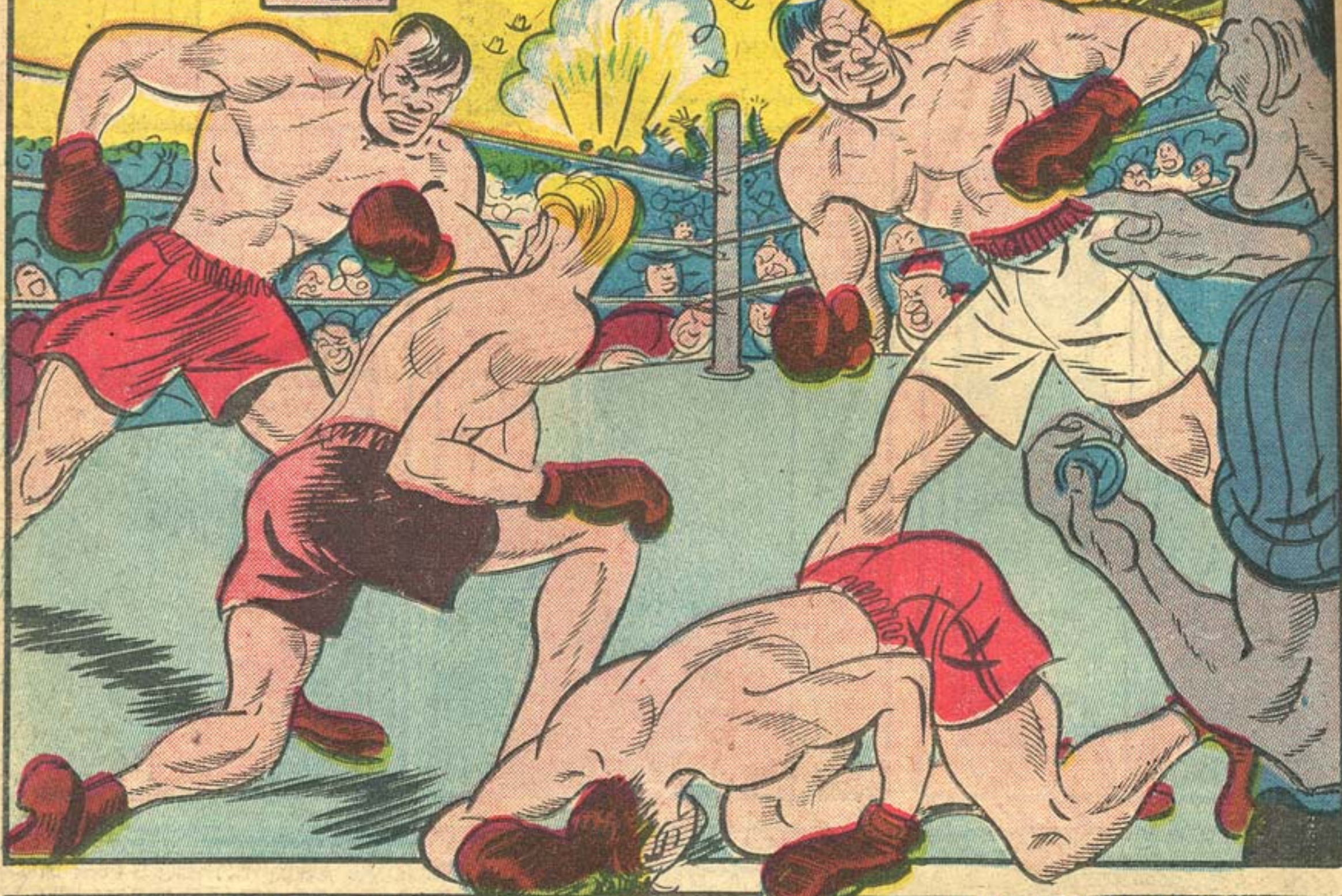
SAVE
ME!
SAVE
ME!



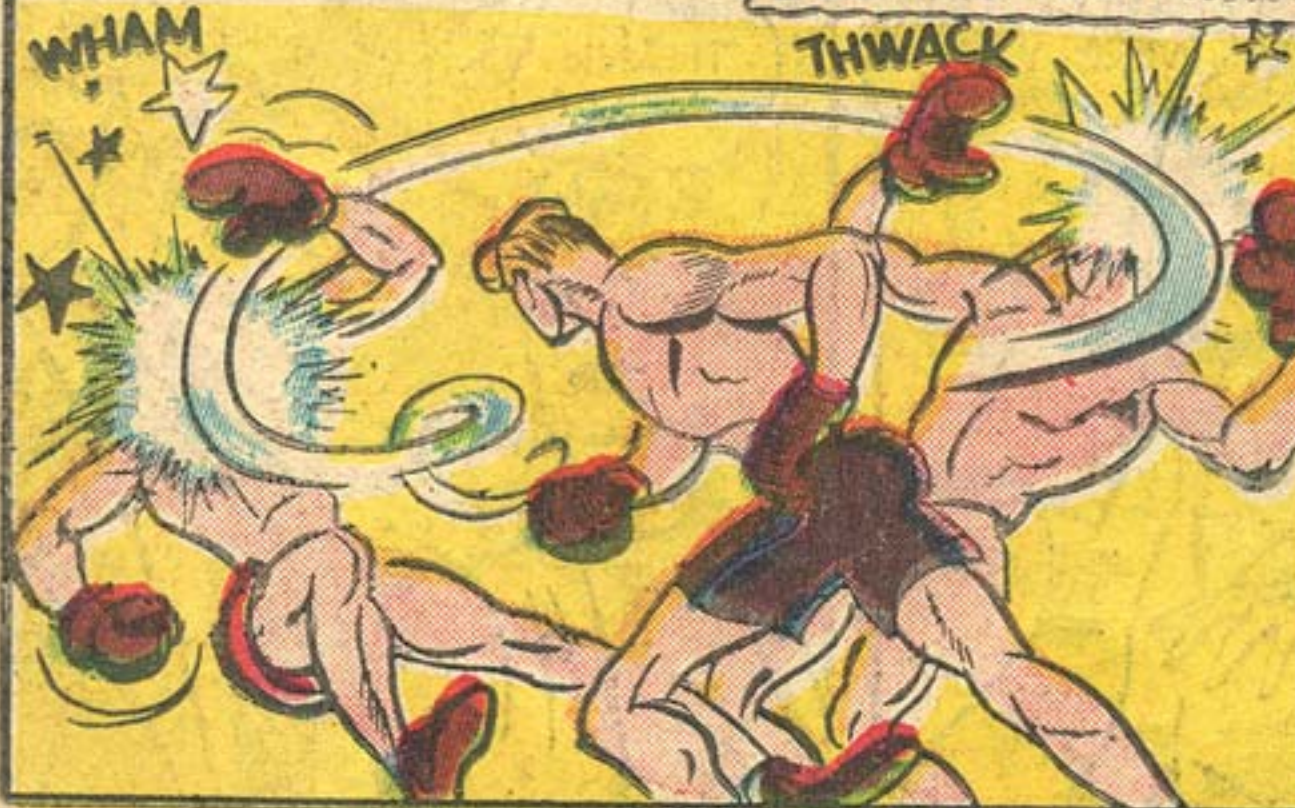


The ST. LOUIS KID

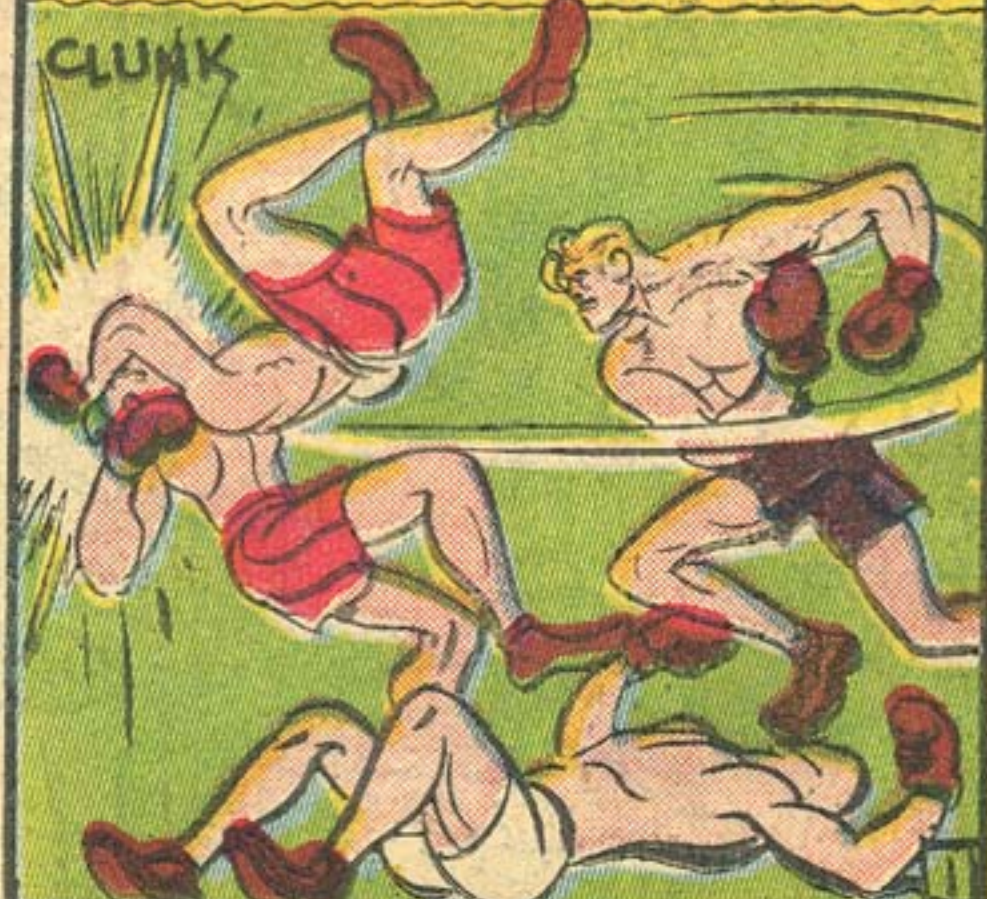
IN THE LAST ISSUE, JIM JENNINGS, THE ST. LOUIS KID, WHO IS IN TRAINING IN BERMUDA FOR A BOUT WITH THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMP, STEPPED INTO THE SQUARED ARENA WITH THREE TOP NOTCH FIGHTERS IN ORDER TO RAISE SORELY NEEDED CASH. AT THE MOMENT THE KID APPEARS TO HAVE HIS HANDS FULL....



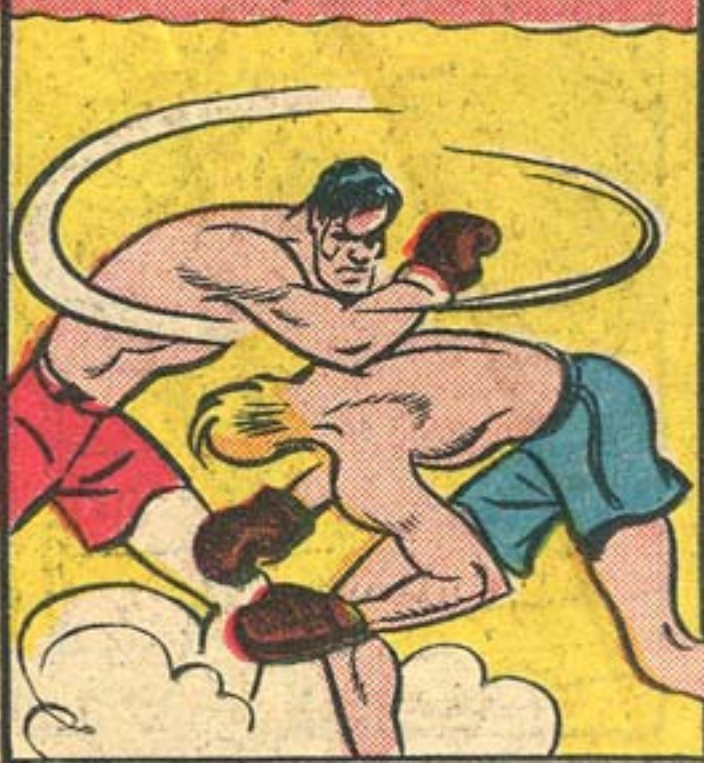
SUDDENLY, STRIKING SWIFTLY AS A COILED SNAKE, AND EQUALLY AS DEADLY, THE KID COMES AROUND WITH A BOOMING RIGHT.....



... ANOTHER SLASHING HAYMAKER.....



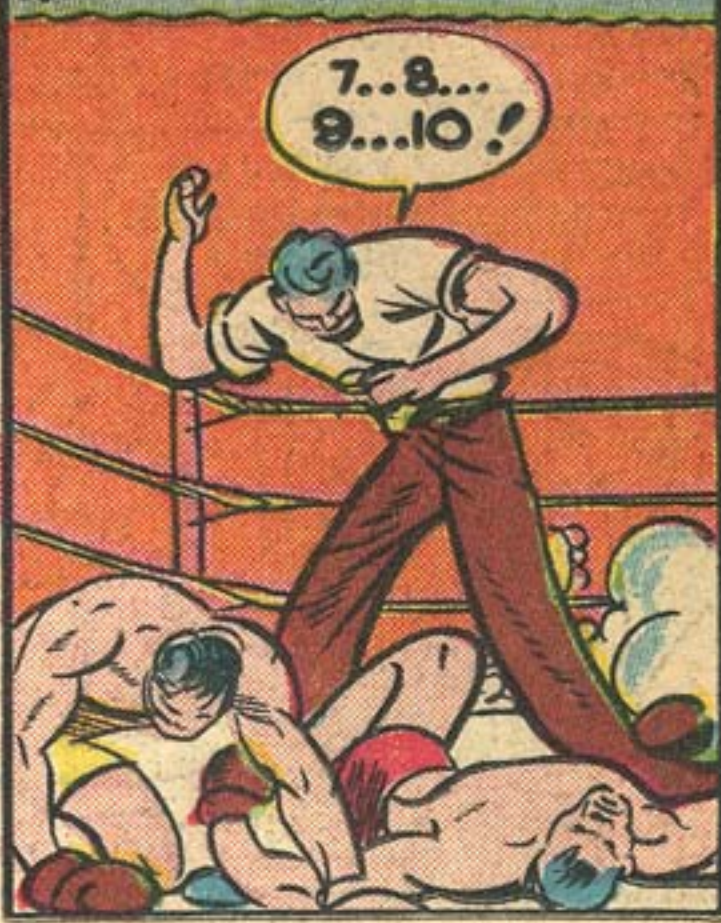
...AND STILL THEY KEEP COMING. A LONE FIGHTER RUSHES SAVAGELY, AND ALMOST CATCHES THE KID OFF-GUARD...



THE KID COMES BOUNCING BACK, AND PITCHES A THIRD STRIKE!!



...AND THEY'RE OUT!



LATER IN THE KID'S DRESSING ROOM...

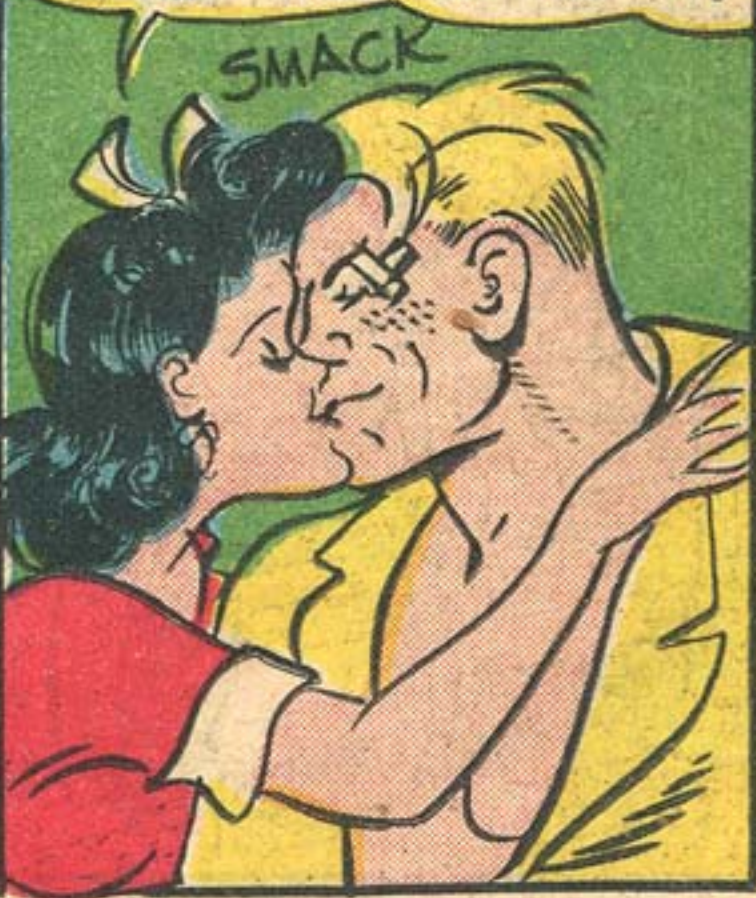


HIYA, MARY! HELLO, MR. DYKE!

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE IT, KID! I...I...DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU!



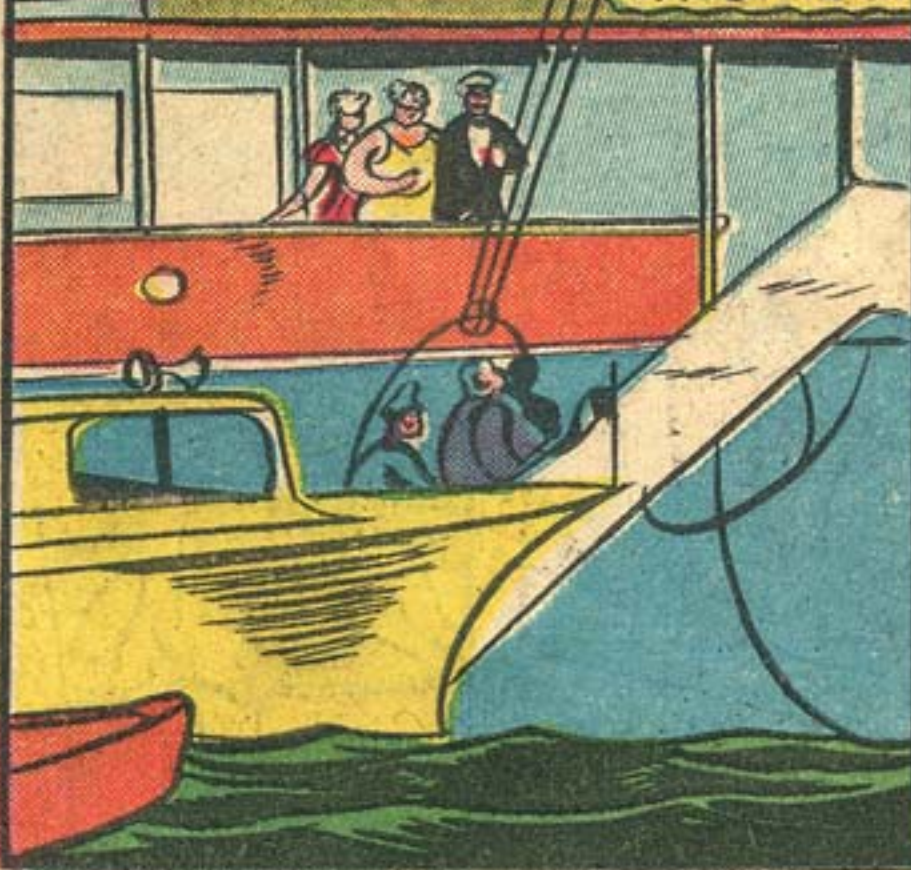
I DON'T CARE WHAT ANYBODY SAYS, JIM! IT'S NOBLE OF YOU TO HELP MR. DYKE THIS WAY!



POP MOLLOY, MARY'S FATHER, DECIDES TO STEP OUT...

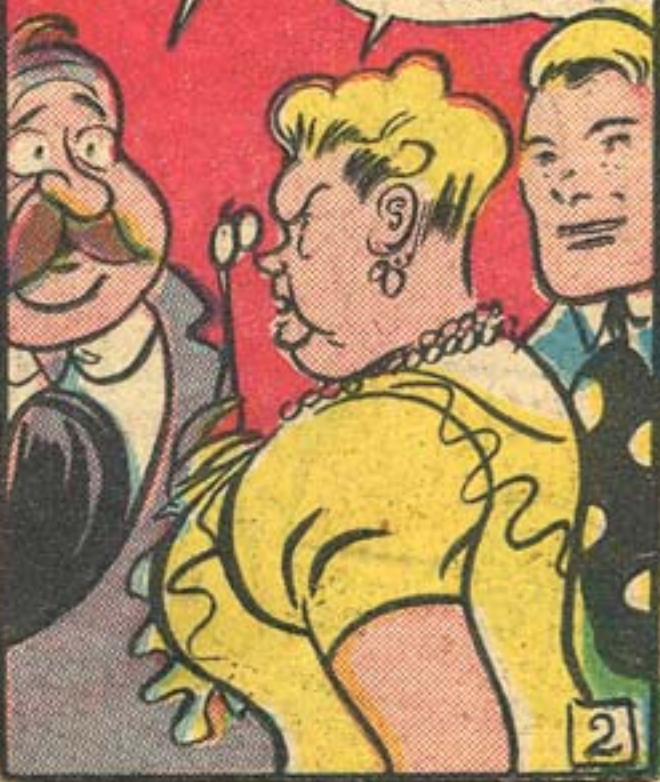


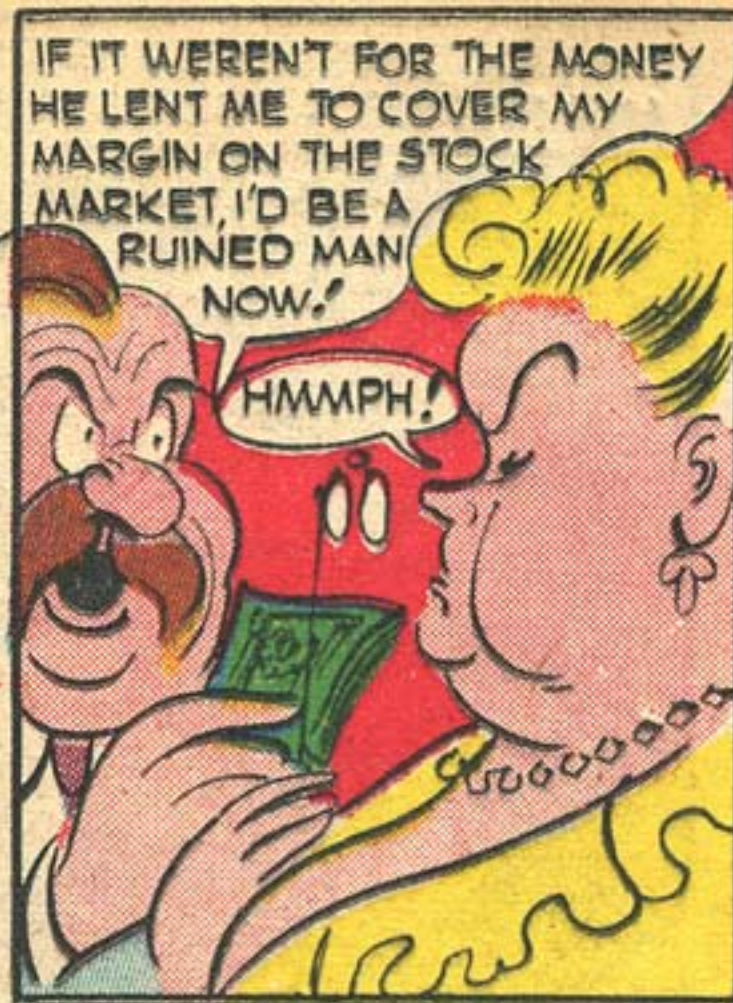
LATER, ALL RETURN WITH MR. DYKE TO HIS YACHT, WHERE THE KID HAS HIS TRAINING QUARTERS...AND ARE MET BY MRS. DYKE AND HER DAUGHTER..



HELLO, MY DEAR, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE WAITED UP FOR ME!

GREGORY DYKE! YOU AND I ARE GOING TO HAVE A TALK IN PRIVATE!





ONE OF THE BOSTON MOLLOYS, YOU SAID, MR. DYKE. AREN'T THEY THE..ER..MEAT PACK-
ING MILLIONAIRES?

WHY, YES. THEY DO HAVE SCADS OF MONEY..NOT THAT IT MATTERS..OF COURSE.

HA, HA, HA. THAT POOR SUCKER FELL FOR IT. HIS FACE LIT UP LIKE A DRUNK'S NOSE WHEN I MENTIONED MONEY.

ISN'T IT A LOVELY ROMANTIC NIGHT, COUNT?

ER..HARRUMPH YOU TOOK THE WORDS RIGHT OUT OF MY MOUTH, MY..AHM..DEAR!

WOW! LOOKA HIM MAKIN' GOO GOO EYES AT HER. BOY O' BOY, WAIT'LL MY DAUGHTER GETS A LOAD OF THE COUNT, NOW!

COUNT! YOU SHOULDN'T! YOU'RE ENGAGED TO MISS DYKE, AREN'T YOU?

NONSENSE, MY DEAR, SHE'S JUST A PASSING-FANCY!

JUST THEN, THE KID COMES UP ON DECK AND SEES...

WHY THE DIRTY..

YOU MISERABLE LITTLE PUPPY, I'LL TEACH YOU TO MAKE A PLAY FOR MY GIRL, YOU...

B.BUT..P.PLEASE!

MR. DYKE CHOOSES THIS MOMENT TO RETURN WITH HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER..

MERCY! THE BRUTE IS ATTACKING THE COUNT!

HAALP!

KID, PLEASE! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!

HURRY MEN! THROW THAT MURDEROUS CREATURE OVERBOARD BEFORE HE KILLS THE COUNT!

BOP

AT THAT MOMENT, POP COMES ABOARD WITH A "FRIEND"...

GEE WHIZ!
SOME LAYOUT!

YA SEE, FLOSSIE,
I TOLD YA, I
WUZ A BIG
SHOT!

THEY COME UPON THE SCENE
OF THE FIGHT AND....

POPSY, LOOK!

HEY!
WHAT'S COMIN'
OF HERE?

SO YOU WANTA 'THROW
ME OVERBOARD, EH?
MAYBE THIS'LL CHANGE
YOUR MIND!

ZUNK

OSCAR!
MY LITTLE JELLY-
BEAN! COME
TO MAMA!

WHAT DOES
THIS MEAN? WHO
IS THIS COW?

AWRK!

GEE, I THOUGHT
I'D NEVER FIND YOU
AGAIN!

SMACK

ER.. YOU SEEM TO KNOW
THE COUNT VERY WELL!

WHAT COUNT? THIS GUY'S
MY HUSBAND. SEE, HERE'S
OUR WEDDING LICENSE!

HE WUZ MY BUS-
BOY IN THE HASH-
HOUSE WHERE I WUZ
A WAITRESS. THAT'S
HOW WE FIRST FELL
IN LOVE, HUH,
SNOOKS?

ER.. FLOSSIE!
SH..

HA, HA, HA, I GUESS
THE LAUGH'S ON
US, EH, MR. DYKE?
INSTEAD OF JUST
THROWING THAT
PHONY COUNT OVER-
BOARD I GOT A
BETTER IDEA!
BZZ..BZZ....

HMM...
SPLENDID!



SEE HERE, MY DEAR, I HAVE A JOB FOR YOU! WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO BZZ..BZZ..BZZ..

YOU SAID IT, TOOTS!



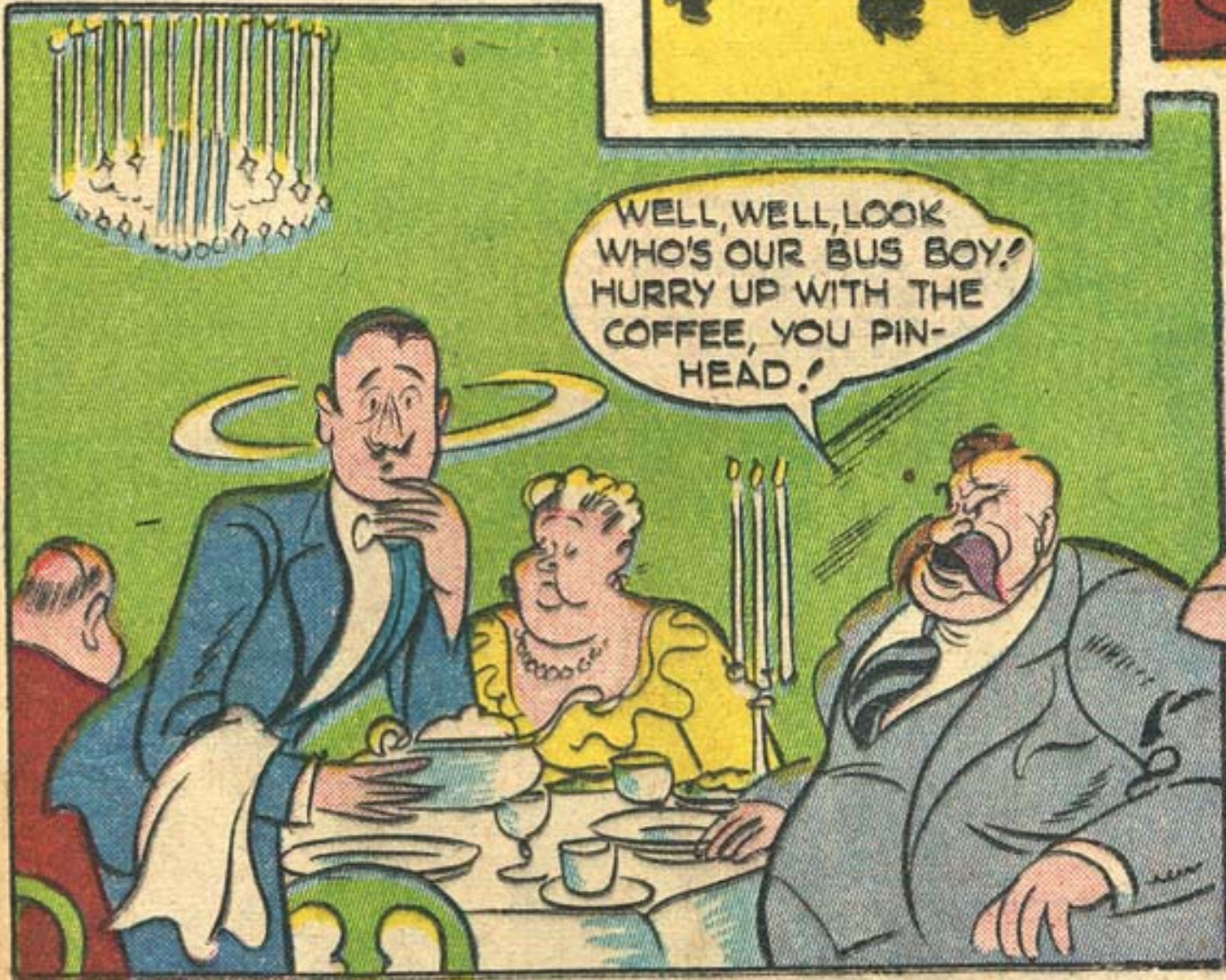
SHUFFLE THEM BROGANS, OSCAR! WE GOT THINGS TO DO!

Y..YES, MY SWEET!



NEXT DAY...

DINNER IS READY, FOLKS!



WELL, WELL, LOOK WHO'S OUR BUS BOY! HURRY UP WITH THE COFFEE, YOU PIN-HEAD!



HA, HA, HA, HA! DID YOU SEE THE LOOKS ON MY WIFE'S AND DAUGHTER'S FACES WHEN THE COUNT WALKED IN AS A BUS BOY?



JUST THEN.. CABLEGRAM FOR THE ST. LOUIS KID, SIR!



HOLY MACKEREL! THE COMMISSION'S CANCELLED YOUR HEAVYWEIGHT BOUT, KID, FOR FIGHTIN' THOSE THREE GUYS!



KID, I..I'M SO DEUCEDLY SORRY! IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF ME!

DON'T WORRY, MR. DYKE. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK ON TOP OF THE HEAP AGAIN IN NO TIME!

HEARTBREAKING DISAPPOINTMENT LIES BEHIND THE KID'S SMILING FACE.... WILL HE BE AT THE TOP OF THE HEAP AGAIN? READ NEXT MONTH'S TOP-NOTCH!

WINGS JOHNSON

Air Patrol

OF
THE

HENRY! DON'T THOSE
TWO FELLOWS
LOOK FAMILIAR?

WINGS JOHNSON AND HENRY
HIGGINS, OF THE R.A.F. ARE
AT THEIR AIRDROME SOME-
WHERE IN THE NORTH OF
ENGLAND.

YOU'RE BLINKING RIGHT!
THEY'RE THE TWO BLOODY
BLOKES WE HAD TO TEACH AT
FLYING SCHOOL! REMEMBER?

OH BOY! THERE THEY GO AGAIN
I NEVER SAW TWO DUMBER
CLUCKS IN MY WHOLE LIFE!
LET'S GET AS FAR AWAY
FROM THEM AS POSSIBLE
AND DOUBLE QUICK!

OH, I SAY JOHNSON!
AND YOU, TOO, HIGGINS!
I WANT A WORD
WITH YOU!

OH!
YES, SIR!

I HAVE AN ASSIGNMENT FOR
YOU TWO! TONIGHT YOU'RE TO
TAKE A BOMBER-UNESCORTED
AND TRY TO REACH THE
INVASION BASE AT CALAIS!
WE MUST BOMB IT TO
OBLIVION AND A LONE
BOMBER MAY BE ABLE TO
BREAK THROUGH AND DO IT!

THOSE TWO NEW RECRUITS OVER THERE WILL ACCOMPANY YOU, ONE AS OBSERVATION PILOT, THE OTHER AS A SECONDARY GUNNER / OH, SAY! THEY SEEM TO BE HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH THEIR CHUTES, DON'T THEY

H'I'M SPEECHLESS!

BETTER GIVE EM A HAND, EH WHAT?

YEAH, BUT KEEP THEM AWAY FROM MY RIPCORDER. THOSE GUYS HAVE AN UNHAPPY HABIT OF PULLING THEIR CHUTES AT THE WRONG TIME!

OH, DO YOU KNOW THEM, JOHNSON?

MUCH TO MY REGRET, I HAVE HAD THE DOUBTFUL PLEASURE OF MEETING THEM ONCE / AND ONCE WAS TOO MUCH!

H'UP YOU COME LADDIES!

GOSH! THAT WAS THE MOST PECULIAR THING, I JUST PULLED THIS LITTLE RING HERE AN'—

LOOK I'LL SHOW YOU! IT'S THIS LITTLE GADGET HERE! YOU JUST PULL IT AND—

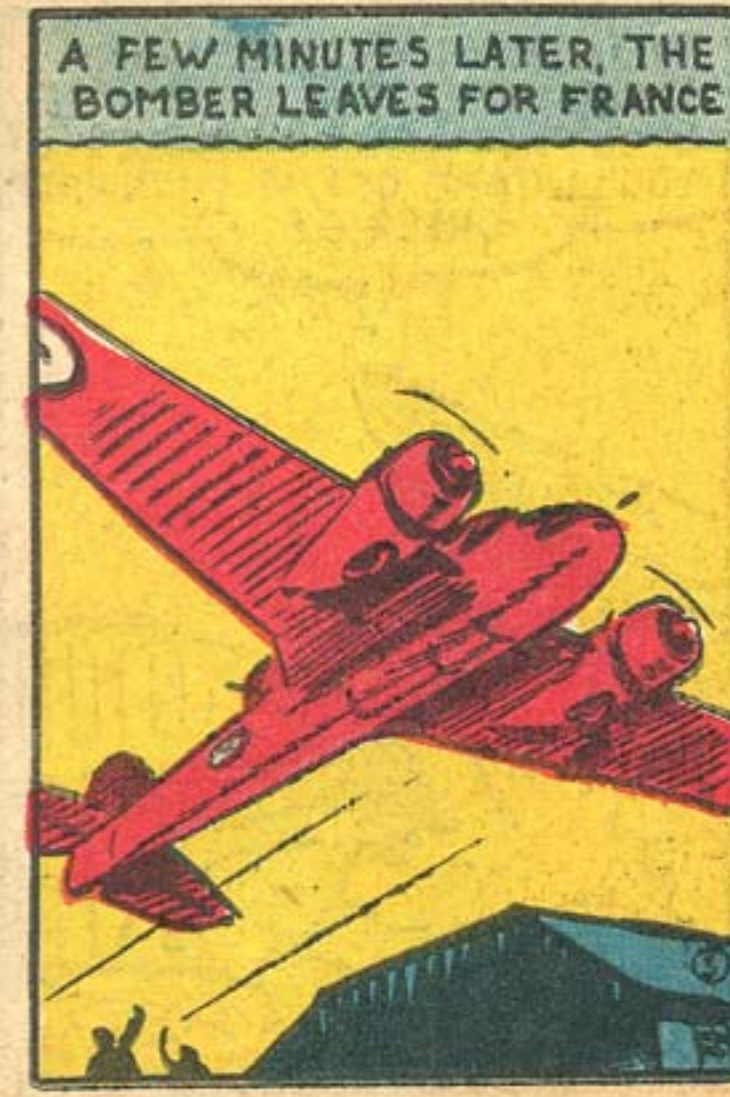
OH, NO YOU DON'T! BROTHER R.A.F. PILOT OR NOT—YOU'RE KEEPING YOUR MITTS OFF MY RIPCORDER!

WELL, GENTLEMEN, SINCE YOU ALL KNOW EACH OTHER, THERE'S NEED FOR ME TO INTRODUCE YOU! YOU'LL TAKE OFF AT MIDNIGHT! CHEERIO!

MIDNIGHT.....

ALL SET BOYS? SAY, ALGERNON WHERE'S YOUR PAL?

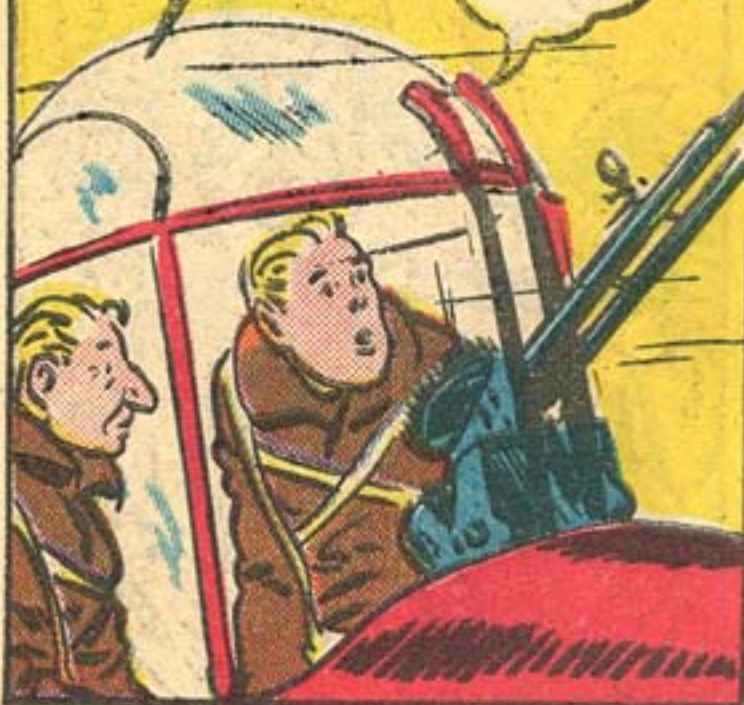
WHO - MARMADUKE? I DUNNO! HE WAS HERE A MINUTE AGO!



IN THE GUN TURRET

NOW KEEP YOUR BLOODY EYES H'OPEN FER THE NAZIS!

I AM!



AS THE BOMBER REACHES THE MIDDLE OF THE ENGLISH CHANNEL, HY CUTS THE MOTORS.....

HEY! WHAT'S WRONG

NOTHING, I CUT THE MOTOR ON PURPOSE. WE'RE GOING TO TRY TO SLIP OVER OUR OBJECTIVE, BEFORE THEY HEAR US



SUDDENLY...//

LOOK! DOWN BELOW US/ NAZI BOMBERS!

YEAH! AND THEY'RE BOUND FOR ENGLAND WITH THEIR MOTORS OFF!



GET BACK TO THE GUN TURRET AND TELL HIGGINS. QUICK!



HEY, HIGGINS! WE JUST SAW GERMAN BOMBERS BELOW US AND -----



I'LL BANK AROUND AND FOLLOW 'EM

AS WINGS CHANGES HIS COURSE IT THROWS MARMADUKE OFF BALANCE

-- WHOOPS!

DON'T GRAB THOSE WIRES!



MARMADUKE, TO SAVE HIMSELF FROM FALLING, GRABS THE WIRES WHICH RELEASE THE FLARES!



AND A FEW SECONDS LATER THE NAZI BOMBERS UNLOAD THEIR EGGS!



BOY! HENRY SURE PULLED A FAST ONE. THE GERMANS THOUGHT WE WERE THEIR OWN FLARELIGHTERS, SIGNALING FOR THEM TO RELEASE THEIR TIME BOMBS!



A MOMENT LATER, IN THE GERMAN FLARE-LIGHTER PLANE...

ZEEM DONNERVETTER, WE DROPPED OUR BOMBS RIGHT IN CHANNEL! WHO RELEASED THOSE FLARES?... AHA AN ENGLISH PLANE! I SHALL GIVE THE ALARM!.....

THE NAZIS PLANES OPEN FIRE ON WINGS' SHIP WITH THEIR CANNONS!

WOW! A SHELL LANDED RIGHT HERE IN THE TURRET! IT'S STARTING A FIRE

A SUDDEN LURCH OF THE PLANE AND -

LOOK OUT YOU'RE FALLING IN THE FIRE!

LOOK OUT YOURSELF YOU'RE PULLING MY RIP-CORD!

HOLY COW! YOUR CHUTE'S RIGHT IN THE FLAME!

DO YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW IT!

MEANWHILE HENRY HAS GRABBED UP A FIRE EXTINGUISHER AND WITHOUT LOOKING.....

OOPS! SORRY OLD SOCK!

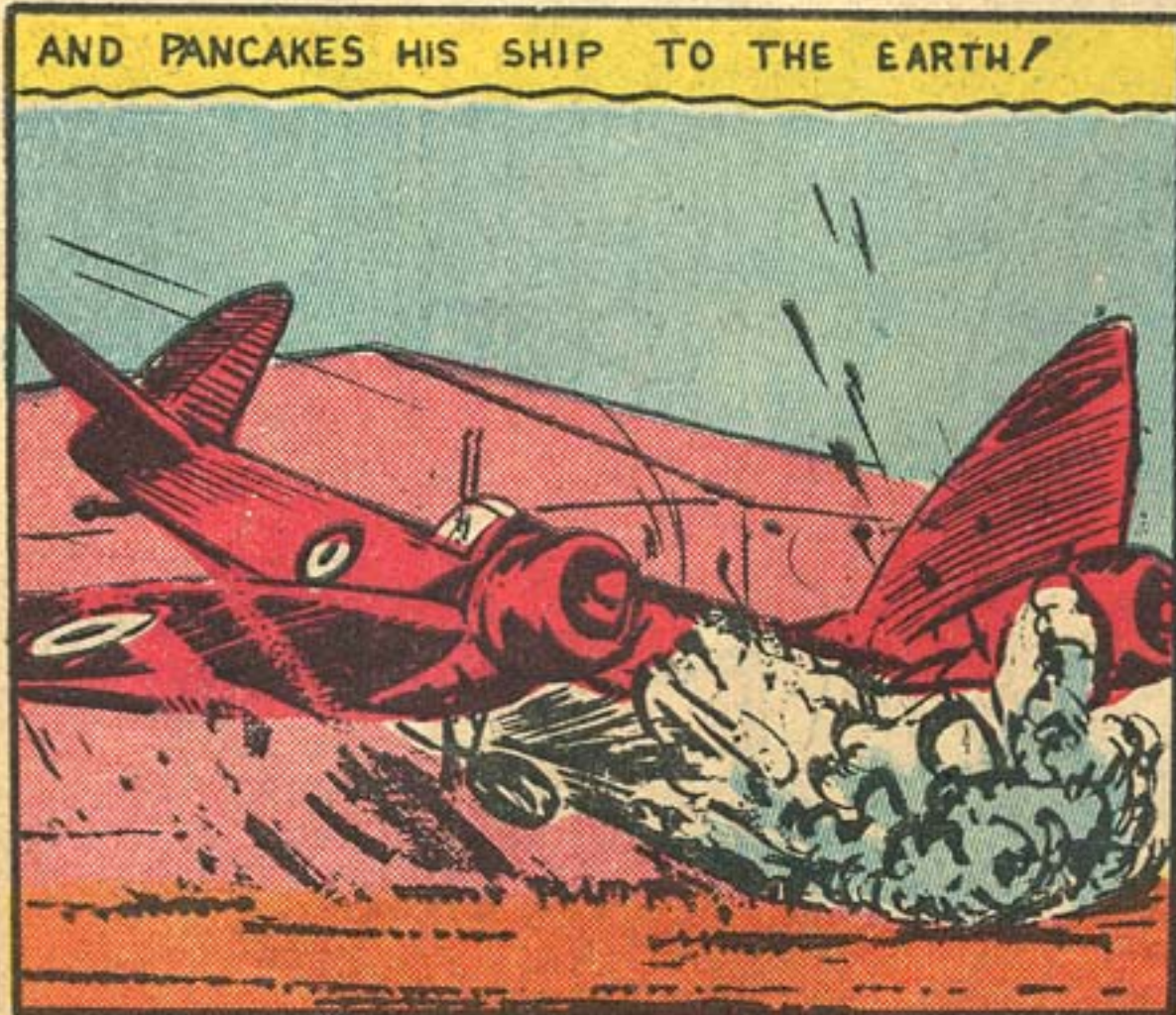
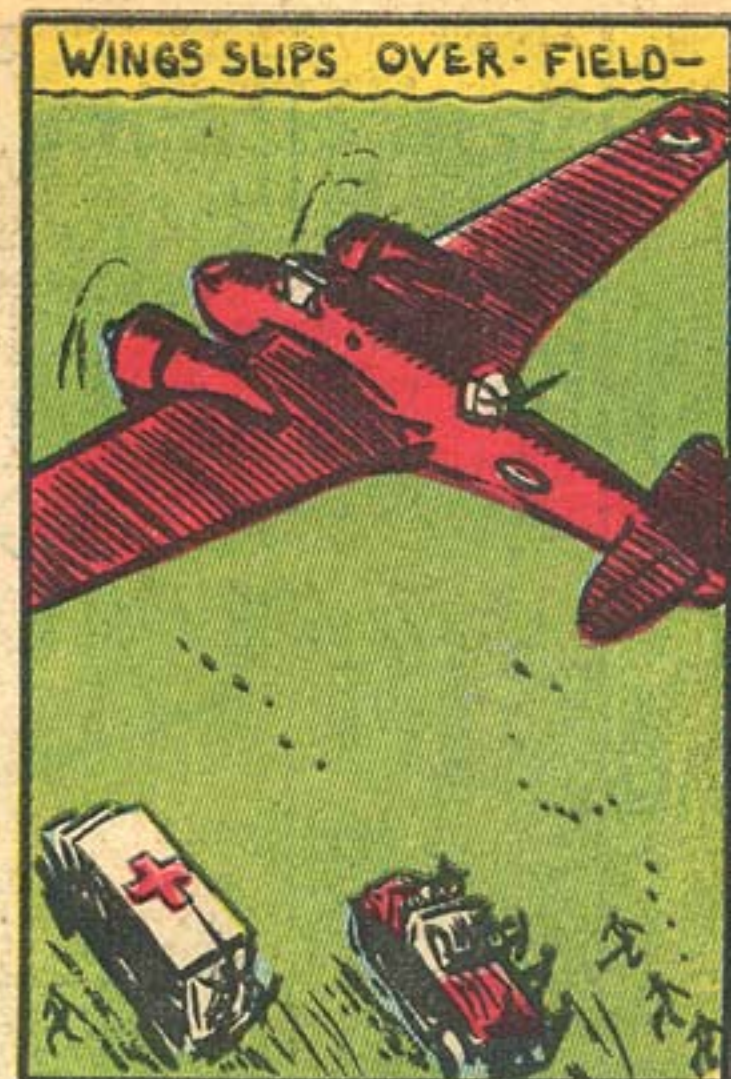
THE SUPERIOR SPEED OF WINGS' BOMBER ENABLES HIM TO OUT-RUN THE GERMAN SHIPS AND HE SOON ARRIVES OVER HIS AIRDROME. BUT THEN -

JOHNSON DOESN'T DARE LAND THAT SHIP! HIS LEFT WHEEL IS GONE! QUICK, GET IN TOWN WITH HIM!

YES SIR!

WHAT'S THIS? CO SAYS WE'RE MINUS OUR LANDING GEAR! GET THE BOYS AND TELL 'EM TO BAIL OUT! YOU, TOO, HENRY! I'M GOING TO TRY AND LAND THIS THING MYSELF, WE CAN'T AFFORD TO CRACK UP ANY SHIPS!

RIGHT-O. WINGSIE!



BOB PHANTOM

SCOURGE OF THE UNDERWORLD



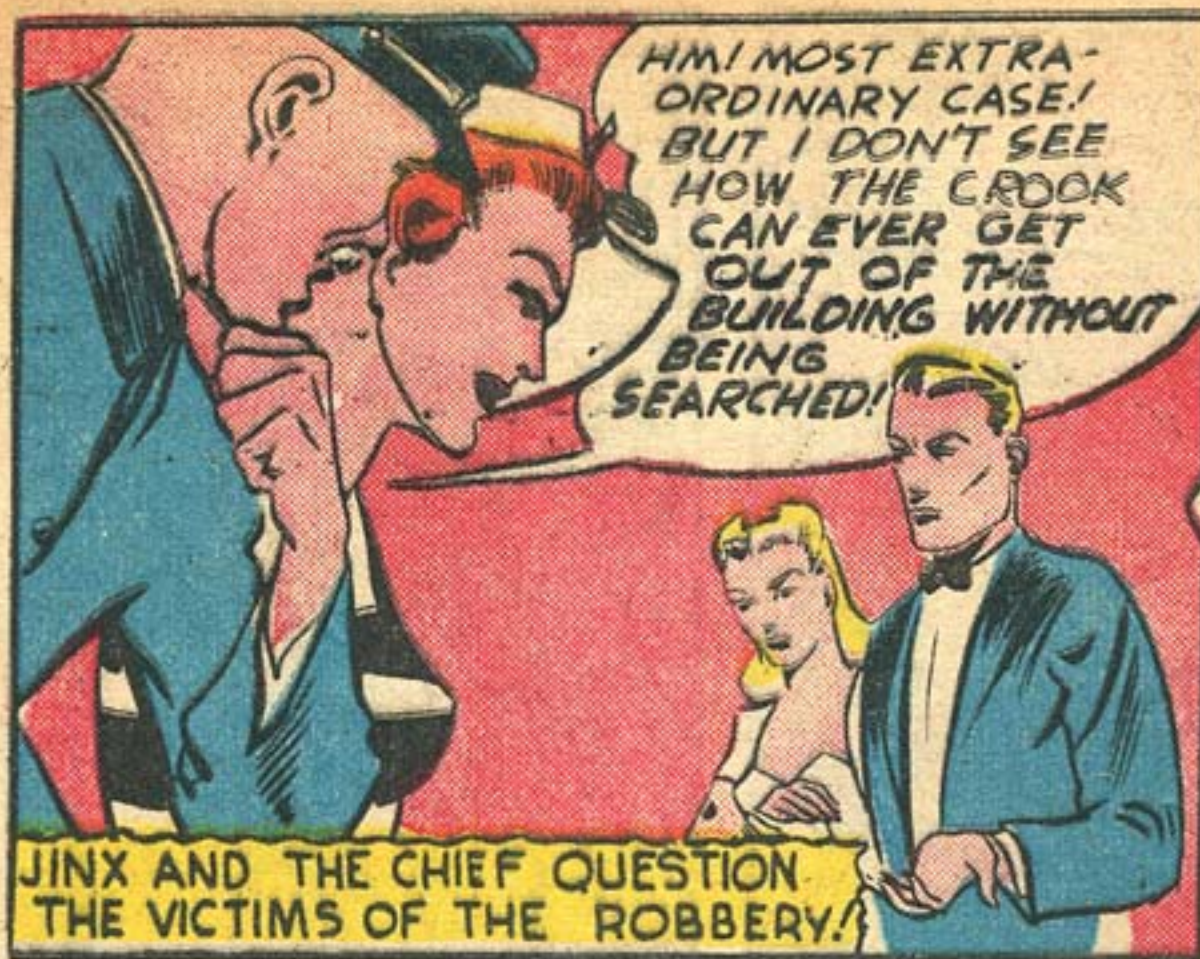
A MASKED MAN, GUN IN HAND, SUDDENLY APPEARS IN A JEWELRY SHOP IN NEW YORK'S FAMOUS 'DIAMOND MART'... WHILE ON THE STREET OUTSIDE, WALT WHITNEY, BROADWAY COLUMNIST, IS STROLLING WITH HIS SECRETARY, JINX FRIDAY!

WHO'S THAT MAN WHO JUST PASSED WALT?

THAT'S TIGER ROSS, THE MOVIE MAGNATE, AND A GREAT GUY WITH THE LADIES! NOW, KEEP YOUR BIG EYES OPEN AND THEN REMEMBER WHO PEOPLE ARE! THAT'S WHAT MAKES ME SO GOOD!







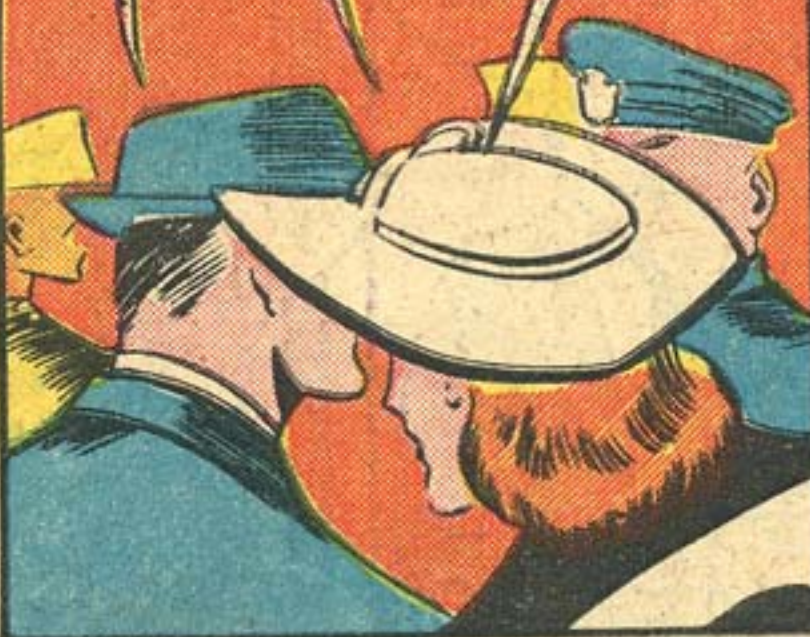
THE ELEVATOR DESCENDS TO THE FIRST FLOOR!



HST DO YOU NOTICE ANY-
THING STRANGE, MR. OBSERV-
ING MAN?

WHY NO!

WELL I DO!
TELL YOU ABOUT
IT DOWNSTAIRS!



THE POSTMAN CAN GO OUT,
BUT I'LL HAVE TO SEARCH
THE REST OF YOU!

OKAY!



I'LL HAVE TO SEARCH
YOU TOO, MISTER!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT,
FAGAN! I SEARCHED
HIM MYSELF! HE'S
OKAY, LET HIM GO!



SO LONG, CAPTAIN!
I HOPE YOU CATCH
THE CROOK!

THANKS!
BUT DON'T
WORRY, WE
WILL! HE
CAN'T GET PAST
US!



WALT THAT
MAIL-
MAN!

WHAT
ABOUT
HIM?



JINX WHISPERS IN WALT'S EAR!

WHAT! HOLY SMOKES!
I THINK YOU'RE
RIGHT! LEMME
OUT OF
HERE!



OKAY! WE'RE SET!
LET'S GO!



ONCE AGAIN, A SWIRL OF WIND - A PUFF OF SMOKE, AND BOB PHANTOM APPEARS IN FRONT OF THE SPEEDING CAR!

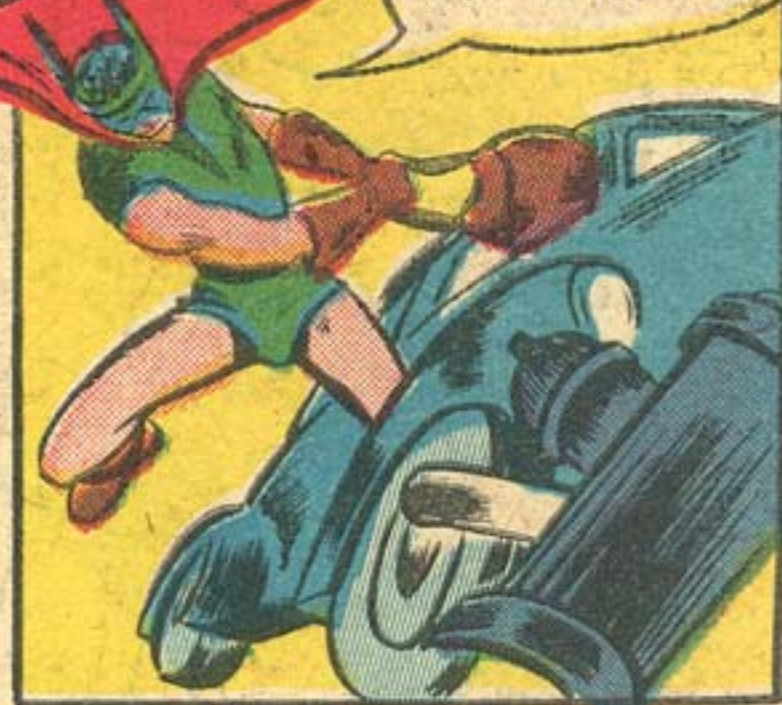
HEY! LOOK! BOB PHANTOM!



I'M DOING MY CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EARLY, BOYS!



SO I WANT TO SEE WHAT SANTA CLAUS HAS IN THE MAIL BAG FOR ME!



YEP! JINX WAS RIGHT! THE JEWELS ARE RIGHT IN HERE!



LOOK CHIEF THIS CASE IS LITERALLY IN THE BAG!

WELL OF ALL THE... HEY! BET THAT YOU HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS!



SURE I DID! I CAUGHT YOUR CROOKS, DIDN'T I? SO LONG!



NEXT DAY, AT WALT'S OFFICE.

HELLO, JINX! HOW'S THE GIRL? STILL KEEPING YOUR EYES OPEN?



NEAT BIT OF WORK YOU DID! EASY! I KNEW THE MAILMAN WAS A PHONEY BECAUSE HE KEPT HIS BAG ON HIS BACK IN THE ELEVATOR. A REAL MAILMAN SWINGS IT IN FRONT OF HIM IN CROWDED PLACES SO HE CAN WATCH IT!



I WAITED TO SEE HOW YOU'D MAKE OUT IN YOUR FIRST JOB IN BLUE RIBBON COMICS, CAPTAIN FLAG! BOY, YOU SURE PICKED YOURSELF A TOUGH ONE WITH THAT BLACK HAND! BUT YOU CAME THROUGH WITH FLYING COLORS!!

THANKS, HANGMAN! IF I CAN HOLD UP MY END HALF AS WELL AS YOU DO IN PEP! COMICS, I'LL BE MORE THAN SATISFIED! YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF QUITE A JOB IN THE SEPT. ISSUE, I UNDERSTAND! I'M PLENTY ANXIOUS TO SEE HOW YOU MAKE OUT!

CAPTAIN FLAG IS BORN IN THE SEPT. ISSUE OF BLUE RIBBON COMICS, AND IS TEAMED UP WITH HIS AMERICAN EAGLE, YANK! LOOK FOR THEM!!



DUSTY

HAS HIS FLING IN...
SHIELD
WIZARD NO. 4



ON SALE NOW
AT ALL NEWS
STANDS ONLY
10¢

It's here, Gang!!

JACKPOT

comics

NO.2



BOY O BOY! THE NEW JACKPOT'S OUT. JACKPOT NO.1 WENT LIKE HOT CAKES AND I DIDN'T EVEN GET A SMELL OF IT, 'CAUSE I WAITED TOO LONG. BUT, THIS TIME, I'M FIRST ON LINE FOR MY COPY!!



THRILL WITH STEEL STERLING AND LAUGH WITH LOONEY AND CLANCY IN... MURDER GOES TO *Mexico!*



MR. JUSTICE - THE SPOOKIEST, MOST BLOOD-CURDLING YARN YOU EVER HAVE OR EVER WILL READ IN... THE CASE OF THE GANGSTER'S GHOST!



SERGEANT BOYLE SAYS: "THIS TIME I'VE GOT ME A MAN-SIZED JOB CARRYING MUNITIONS TO THE BRITISH IN SMYRNA. I'M WARNING THAT TOW-HEADED APE, CORPORAL COLLINS, TO KEEP AWAY FROM ME!"



ON SALE AT YOUR NEWS STANDS NOW!! DON'T WAIT!

KARDAK

THE MYSTIC MAGICIAN



ACTING ON A TIP FROM AN ANONYMOUS SOURCE, THE POLICE DRAG THE RIVER FOR A MURDER VICTIM—AND MEET WITH GRUESOME SUCCESS, AS THEIR GRAPPLING HOOKS FETCH A CORPSE OUT OF THE MURKY WATERS!

NO WONDER HE WAS SO HEAVY. HIS FEET ARE ENCASED IN A BLOCK OF CEMENT.

LATER AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, COME CLEAN RIGGIERO, YOU KILLED THAT GUY.

OR YOUR MOB DID IT. SING, AND IT'LL BE EASIER FOR YOU!

LOOK, FEATHERBRAINS! YOU CAN'T PROVE A THING. I GOT A PERFECT ALIBI. WHY DON'T YOU SMARTEN UP AND LAY OFFA ME. IF YOU KEEP DRAGGIN' ME DOWN HERE ANY MORE, I'LL CHARGE YOU FER A COMMUTA-TION TICKET.



JUST THEN -

WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS FOR RIGGIERO! NOW YOU'LL HAVE TO LET HIM GO!

I EXPECTED YOU TO COME ALONG WITH ONE OF THOSE THINGS! OKAY, SWYSTER. GET THE SKUNK OUT OF HERE!

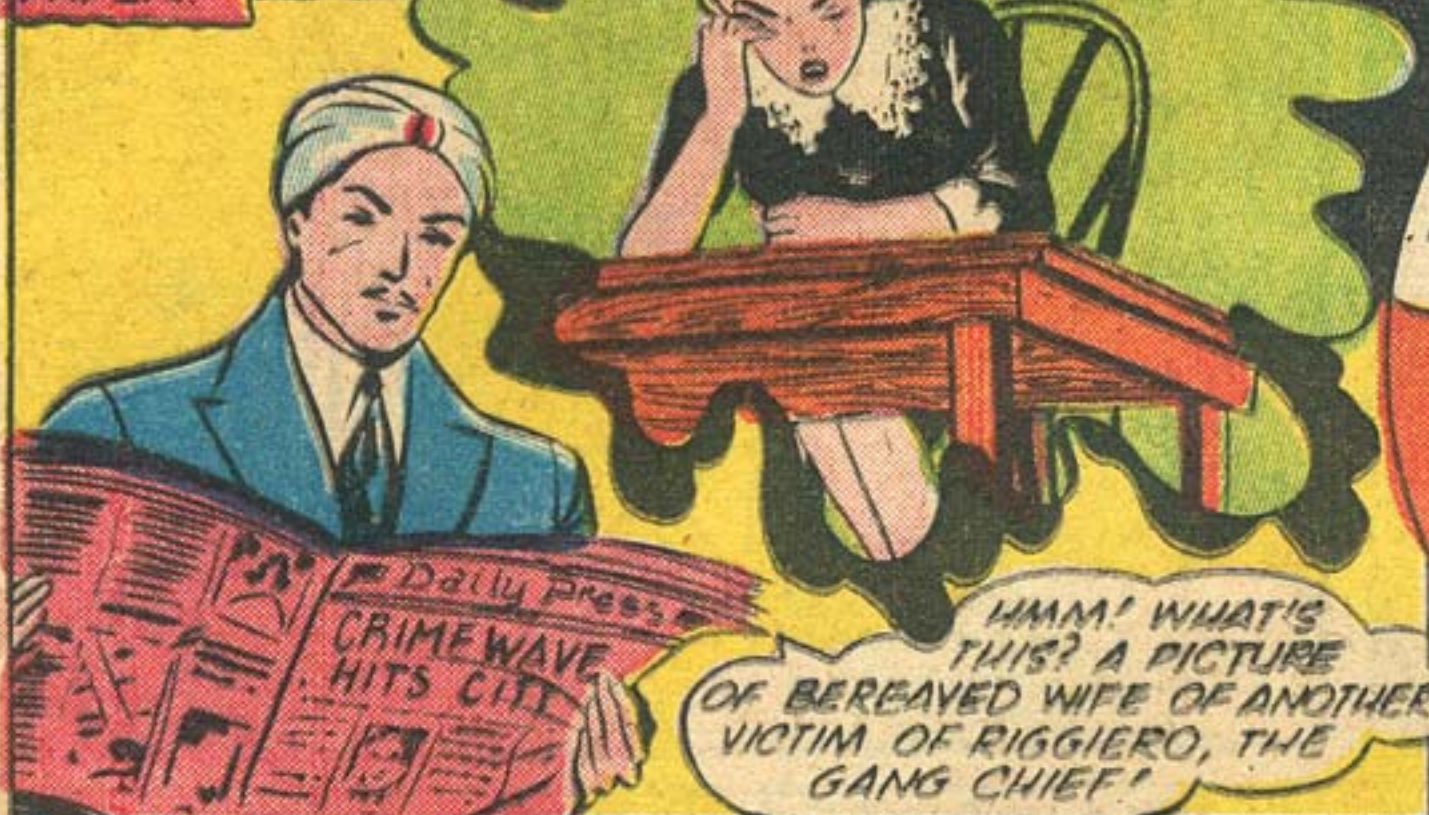


S'LONG, PUNKS. NICE TO HAVE A SMART LAWYER, HUH?

COME ON, RIGGIERO!

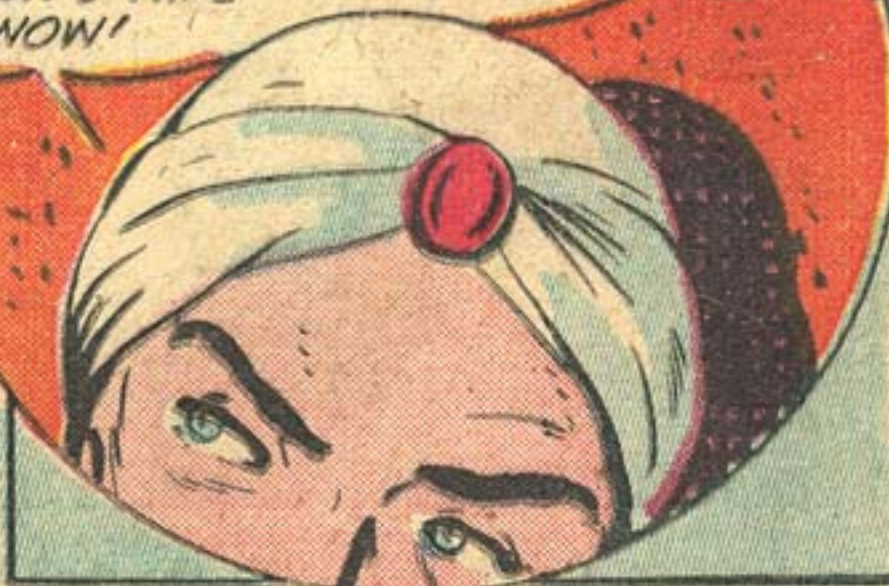


NEXT DAY, KARDAK READS THE NEWS-PAPER



HMM! WHAT'S THIS? A PICTURE OF BEREAVED WIFE OF ANOTHER VICTIM OF RIGGIERO, THE GANG CHIEF!

THAT KILLER HAS LITERALLY GOTTEN AWAY WITH MURDER - AND IT'S HIGH TIME THE LAW CAUGHT UP WITH HIM. MAYBE I CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. I'LL GO RIGHT UP TO THE MURDERED FELLOW'S WIFE NOW!



HMM! WHAT A MISERABLE NEIGHBORHOOD TO LIVE IN!



(SNIFF, SNIFF) WHO IS IT?

MY NAME IS KARDAK MRS REEVES. I JUST READ ABOUT YOUR UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES!



MY HUSBAND USED TO WORK FOR RIGGIERO. BUT HE WANTED TO GO STRAIGHT FOR MY SAKE - AND THEY WOULDN'T LET HIM.





MIGHT AS WELL HAVE SOME GRAVEYARD ATMOSPHERE! PRESTO - AND WE HAVE A NICE FRESH GRAVE!

CRIPES!

ONLY THING IS THAT YOUR NAME LOOKS MORE APPROPRIATE ON IT THAN MINE WOULD!

RIGGIERO

I'M LAMMIN' RIGGIERO! THIS GUYS TOO MUCH FOR ME! WAIT!

LET'S SEE YOUR MAGIC WORK AGAINST MY TYPEWRITER!

WITH PLEASURE!

RAT-TAT-TAT

WHOOOSH!

YOUR TYPEWRITER, AS YOU CALL IT, JUST TYPED OUT THE DATE OF YOUR DEATH!

RIGGIERO
DIED 1941

WELL, WELL. THE BOYS SEEM TO HAVE CHANGED THEIR MINDS!

LET'S BEAT IT! I'M LICKED!

LATER, IN RIGGIERO'S APARTMENT!

WHEW! I NEED A DRINK. THAT MAGICIAN GAVE ME THE WILLIES!

GET THAT MOTOR RUNNIN' MALONE!

HELLO, RIGGIERO! DIDN'T THINK YOU COULD LOSE ME SO EASILY DID YOU?

GULP. AM I SEEIN' THINGS?



FOLLOW THE ADVENTURES OF KARDAK, THE MYSTIC MAGICIAN! EVERY ISSUE OF TOP-NOTCH

Betty Warren

Mamie Mazda



Jufu Watson



Yours,
WITH LOTS OF
PEP,
Joe Higgins
THE SHIELD
and
Dusty

